

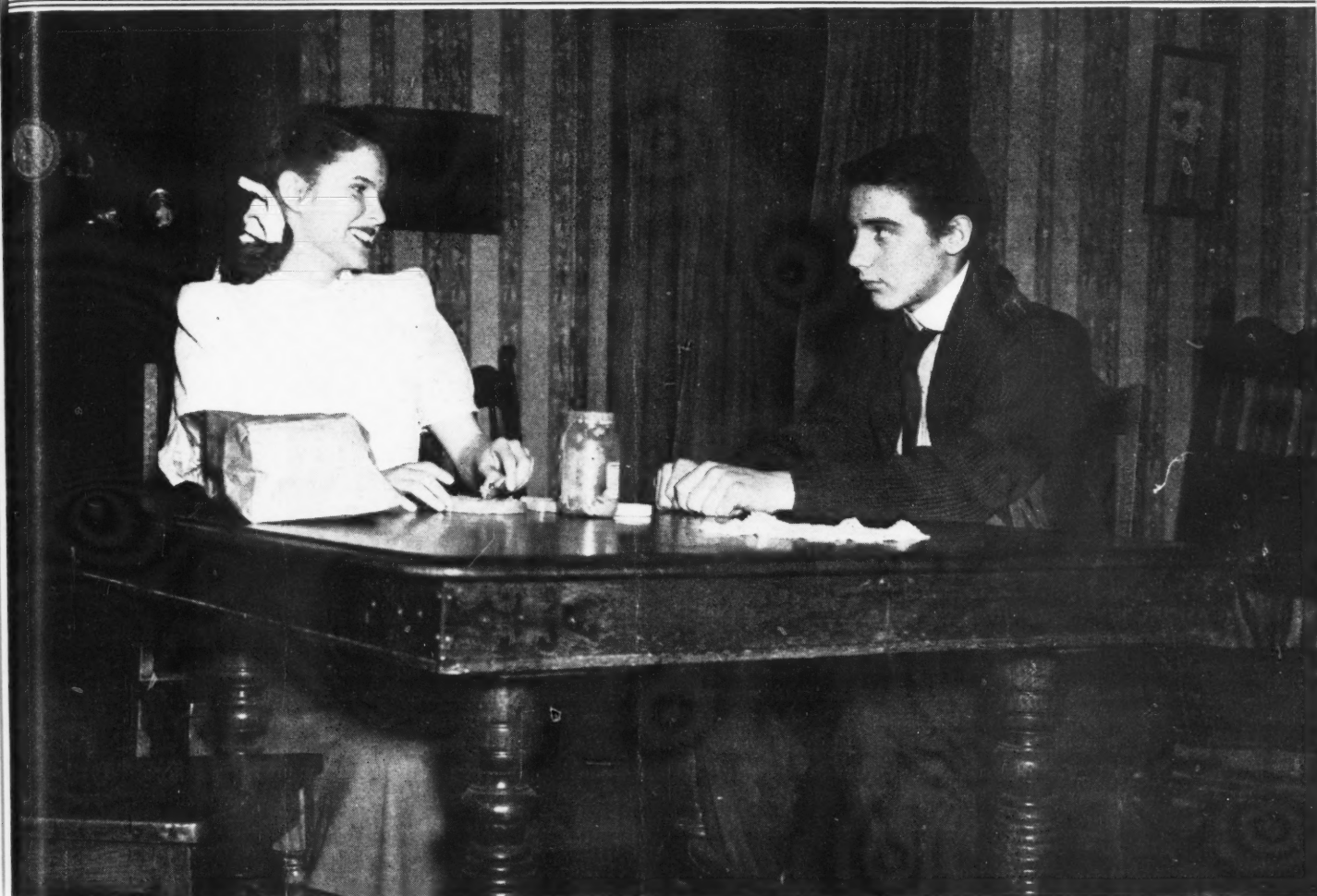
DRAMATICS

An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XX, No. 2

NOVEMBER, 1948

35c Per Copy



Scene from a production of *Years Ago* as staged at the Webster Groves, Mo., High School (Thespian Troupe 191), with Roberta Seibert as director. This scene shows Pris Johns as Ruth Gordon Jones and George Messingale as Fred Whitmarsh.

IN THIS ISSUE

AMATEUR THEATRE IN THE NETHERLANDS

By LOUIS POVEL

OCCUPATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES IN THE COMMUNITY THEATRE

By TALBOT PEARSON

THEATRE COSTUMES AND POPULAR TASTE

By LUCY BARTON

MAKE-UP COLORS AND CONTOURS

By CARL B. CASS

SHOWBOAT THEATRE IS BORN

By G. HARRY WRIGHT

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS IN CHILDREN'S THEATRE

By VIRGINIA LEE COMER

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Mention Dramatics

NOTES

by the
EDITOR

AND

FOOTNOTES

"Theatres for play production throughout the country are very poorly suited to their dual function of accommodating audiences and accommodating the elements of production. Theatres for professional production in New York are outmoded, the newest of them being about 20 years old; theatres for professional play production outside New York are practically non-existent and those that do exist are from 20 to 50 years old. Theatres in college and universities are both very good and very bad, depending upon which you look at, and theatres in high schools are usually very poorly suited to the activity of play production, although they may be part of a modern building recently built, and eminently well planned in most other respects.—Edward C. Cole, Yale University Department of Drama

"In a high school of a thousand pupils there should be as many as ten quality plays per year for all English classes to see and hear, to criticize and evaluate as class work".—George H. Henry writing in the September, 1948, issue of the English Journal.

The Barter Theatre of Abingdon, Virginia, is the recipient of a \$5,000 loan from the American National Theatre and Academy. This is the first financial assistance to be given by ANTA to a theatre outside New York.

Telfair Peet, head of the drama department of Alabama Polytechnic Institute is now perfecting a portable stage composed of aluminum pipe and draperies, with the stage being adaptable and so light and compact that it can be broken down and carried in the trunk of an automobile.

Are your dramatics club meetings for this season well-planned, lively, worthwhile? A variety of timely and interesting suggestions for better club programs are found in the new publication, **TESTED DRAMATICS CLUB PROGRAMS**, issued this fall by The National Thespians Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio. Price, 60¢.

A number of the country's leading newspapers recently carried a news story concerning plans for the third national dramatics arts conference scheduled for June 13 through 18, 1949, at Bloomington, Indiana. The conference will be sponsored by The National Thespians Society with the cooperation of the Indiana University Theatre.

"Human relations will almost automatically be bettered if new ways of perceiving one's situation can be made available, not too solemnly, but with zest and humor, through stories, skits, movies, or better still, actual games, parties, work-projects. As the therapist might state the matter, the person may be assisted in a friendly manner to see himself and his associates in an accepting way, parking his defences and especially his sense of guilt outside the gate—perhaps reliving with Socrates the conception that evil is a form of misunderstanding, or repeating with Jesus the phrase: 'Neither do I condemn thee.'—Dr. Gardner Murphy, psychologist.

Writes student director Robert E. Hawn of the Cleveland Heights, Ohio, High School (Thespians Troupe 410): "Being in the process of directing an all-girl cast, I find that one of the lacking attributes to be that of comprehension on the part of my cast. By this I mean the speed and sureness with which one adapts himself to a situation. One actress has just discovered that someone is plotting an enormous scandal involving her, but still she READS her line like an irate barber repeating the same joke for the 73rd time. To get just a little whisper of emotion from the cast, I have to sweat blood. Now I may be very healthy, but I'm sure that my blood supply would never last for a single page of HAMLET. I strongly suggest that the dramatics instructors try to instill in her students a "dexterity" that would aid in the immediate comprehension of a character. Don't give up hope, Bob. Many an experienced director has looked for the kind of "comprehension" you want. And it is not so easy to instill "dexterity". Will someone offer Bob a few helpful suggestions?"

Changes in faculty sponsors and director for dramatic activities in high schools this season seem to be less than those of previous seasons, according to the files of The National Thespians Society. This is an encouraging development, since the frequent change of sponsors and directors constitutes one of the major obstacles to the betterment of dramatics activities in our secondary schools.

In planning your major dramatic production for this season have you thought of including the presentation of a classic play primarily for its cultural value to the students and townspeople? We believe that the inclusion of a play of this calibre is a sure indication of above-average standing achieved by a dramatics department or club. Why not schedule such a production for spring as a climax to the season's work in dramatics?

Of late, we have been reading a number of new plays. Many of them fall far below the type of material high school drama groups can and should produce. A number of other plays are too sophisticated or too difficult of production by high school groups. With publishers offering plays of this nature, the task of finding suitable materials by high school directors remains most difficult.

Is there a college or university near your school? If there is, why not urge the head of the drama department to sponsor a one-day drama clinic for the high schools of your area this season. Helpful information for sponsoring clinics of this nature may be obtained upon request from The National Thespians Society, College Hill Station, Cincinnati 24, Ohio.

Don't forget that your season's program is incomplete without an impressive dramatic production in observance of Christmas. Now is the time to begin making plans. Why not try a pageant this season?

A directory of Children's Theatres is now available from The American Educational Theatre Association. Copies may be ordered from Wm. P. Halstead, Executive Secretary, AETA, Department of Speech, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

High school speech and dramatics teachers are urged to attend the national conventions of the Speech Association of America and the American Educational Theatre Association to be held in Washington, D. C. December 28, 29, 30.

New Plays for 1948-49

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- **The Brain Storm**, by Bettye Knapp. 8 M. 10 W. Inner Willy as a college freshman. Last season's outstanding success of **The Inner Willy** made a companion play imperative. Preponderantly youthful, the new play should go far.
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- **In Spring the Sap**, by Guernsey LePelley. 6 M. 9 W. Of the many lively plays authored by the talented LePelley, this one is likely to prove the most popular, although his **Love Is Too Much Trouble** has had a sensational response.
- **The Man on the Stairs**, by E. Clayton McCarty. 4 M. 5 W. Produced with outstanding success at New Mexico State College and at Trinity University, this new mystery-comedy offers the cast fine character assignments, and a tense plot.
- **Past Imperfect**, by Kathryn Prather. 6 M. 6 W. The second act of this worthy comedy is a flashback to 1925, affording, for a portion of the cast, interesting opportunities for utilizing costume and make-up skills. The play is thoroughly practicable for any group.

Books for any of the above-listed plays, 85¢ each. Royalty on the Row-Peterson percentage plan; or a flat rate will be quoted.

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- **Special Guest**, by Donald Elser. 3 M. 2 W. Issued late last season, this new play made a commendable start as a contest play of power, worthy to go along with **Balcony Scene**, one of the nation's top favorites.
- **At the Feet of the Madonna**, by Charlotte Lee. 6 W. plus speaking and singing choirs. This choric pageant for Christmas has had thorough testing in four colleges. We consider it outstanding.
- **Unto Us the Living**, by Harold G. Sliker. One of the few really significant choric pageants on the market. Issued last spring, it was enthusiastically received. Perfect for Commencement or for any patriotic occasion.

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CONTENTS

Articles

Amateur Theatre in the Netherlands. <i>By Louis Povel</i>	3
Occupational Opportunities in the Community Theatre. <i>By Talbot Pearson</i>	5
Theatre Costumes and Popular Taste. <i>By Lucy Barton</i>	7
Make-up Colors and Contours. <i>By Carl B. Cass</i>	9
Showboat Theatre Is Born. <i>By G. Harry Wright</i>	11
Organizational Problems in Children's Theatre. <i>By Virginia Lee Comer</i> ..	13

Departments

Notes and Footnotes. <i>By the Editor</i>	1
Theatre on Broadway. <i>By Paul Myers</i>	16
The Play of the Month: Staging <i>A Scrap of Paper</i> . <i>By Theda Taylor</i>	18
The Radio Program of the Month: <i>Harvest of Stars</i> . <i>By S. I. Scharer</i>	20
The Film of the Month: <i>Sealed Verdict</i> . <i>By H. Kenn Carmichael</i>	22
Best Thespian Honor Roll (1947-48 Season)	23
On the High School Stage	28
What's New Among Books and Plays	31

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Scene from the performance of Beaumarchais' comedy, *The Barber of Seville*, staged in the open-air theatre at Lindhoven, Holland. Production designed and directed by Louis Povel.

Amateur Theatre in the Netherlands

By LOUIS POVEL

Theatre Director, Hilversum, Holland

ABOUT a year after the Germans overran Holland, the Dutch amateur theatre practically ceased to exist. It was by no means forbidden, for the Germans are a theatre-minded people. They wanted, however, to mix art with politics and installed a Chamber of Culture. To be allowed to practice art, professionally or non-professionally, every artist had to be a member of this Chamber. Only "Aryans" could be members and only the work of Aryans could be presented in public.

Most societies preferred to stop productions and only a few continued their activities. Much was done to provide entertainment on a small scale in secret. The author gave many readings of prose and poetry in private houses, audiences not exceeding twenty, and he knows of similar house parties given secretly in big residences to audiences of 200 and more.

Even acting was resumed here and there and one of the author's dearest recollections is his taking part in Kenneth Horne's *Yes and No*, performed at the house of his physician in two adjoining rooms separated by gliding doors leaving a proscenium-opening of 6½ feet. It drew "full houses" of 26 and it was difficult to say whether the stage or the auditorium was cramped more. The production, however, was the most high-spirited one he has ever taken part in and it was repeated immediately after the liberation in a resting-home for disabled or sick members of the underground forces.

After the liberation the old groups sprang to life again and numerous new ones developed in every community out of the local clubs formed for the purpose

of celebrating the liberation. The number of play-producing Worker's Clubs of factories, etc., also increased considerably so that, roughly estimated, Holland has about 7000 amateur dramatic societies.

A nation-wide organization is still in its infancy. Early attempts at organization on a big scale have never been successful. The most flourishing federations were those of the Labourer's Dramatic Societies and of the Roman Catholic Drama Groups. Since the liberation, however, a fresh start has been made by N. A. T. U. (Netherlands Amateur Theatre Union) modelled on similar lines as the British Drama League. This organization seems to be getting results. They issue a monthly "HET AMATEURTONEEL" but more widely read is the independent monthly "ONS TONEEL". Up to now between 300 and 400 clubs have affiliated. The number is increasing steadily but does not seem large compared with the estimated total. It must, however, be borne in mind that not everyone of these 7000 societies is trying to serve dramatic art. Lots of them only play "for fun" and these people are not and never will get interested in national organization.

For readers in the country where the Little Theatre was born it must be surprising that Holland has only one Little Theatre. Their theatre, lying in the woods, was originally a barn. The stage has an acting area of 20 x 20 feet. The auditorium, holding 200, is built amphotheatrically and to obtain the necessary wood for this which is still pretty scarce the wooden front and back wall of the barn had to be taken to pieces and replaced by bricks. It is practically impossible to obtain from the Government foreign currency for importing goods which are not strictly necessary. Hence the lighting equipment for the Plankenier's Theatre, designed by the author of this article, could not yet be

completed as many necessary units would have to be imported. Meanwhile the group must get along with hired material.

Last year's programme comprised Priestly's *They Came to a City*, Ben Johnson's *Volpone*, Young's *Hawk Island*, Planten's (Director of the Plankeniers) *Rembrandt*, and a Christmas play by Felix Timmermans.

This year's programme includes: *The Middle Watch* (Hay and Hall), *Spiel im Schloss* (Molnar), *Elisabeth*, *La Femme Sans Homme* (Joset), *Death Takes a Holiday* (Cassella), and *L'Heure H* (Chaim).

The society publishes its own monthly, "De Plankenier". They not only play in their own theatre, they also go on tour. A system of annual subscription for booking seats guarantees that every production has at least six performances in the "home-theatre".

Amateurs without a theatre of their own perform in halls or municipal or privately owned theatres when these are not used by touring companies. To give an idea of the repertory of other seriously working groups I give here some more titles; The N. S. F. Works' Theatre staged *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, *PYGMALION*, *Moliere's MALADE IMAGINAIRE*, *Bernard's LE CAFE* and *Dickens CHRISTMAS CAROL*. For the Theatre Group of Philips Works the author directed *THE SQUEAKER* (Edgar Wallace) and *THE PATRIOT* (Neumann). For his own group, the Hilversumse Rederijkerskamer his stage adaptation of de Vere Stacpoole's *THE MAN WHO LOST HIMSELF* and *Ashley Dukes' MAN WITH A LOAD OF MISCHIEF*.

There has also been a renaissance of open-air productions, although the Dutch climate makes this a rather risky enterprise. In most towns specially written liberation pageants are staged every year but many straight plays are also performed. Some of the Biblical plays of our great 17th century dramatist, Vondel (*Adam in Exile* and *Joseph in Dothan*) are well suited for open-air production and are often performed, as are Shakespeare's comedies. Last summer the author designed and directed the first open-air production in Holland of Beau-

marchais' *Barber de Séville* which most people only know from Rossini's opera. I highly recommend this play and the better known *Marriage de Figaro* to American high school theatres.

Another feature worth trying out especially in small communities, is the waggon-stage experiment carried out for two successive seasons at Hilversum. (I already reported on the first performances in THEATRE ARTS of November, 1946.) It was a revival of the waggon-stage of the Middle Ages done in mediaeval style. In 1946 the play was the 15th century French farce, *Maître Pathelin*; in 1947 we did two short farces.

A wagon with two horses carrying set and actors toured the streets. The fool rang his bells and advertised the show, seated the wrong way on a mule. On the spot where the show was to be performed a rostrum had been erected, the wagon was driven behind it and the show began. After it, and whilst the wagon toured the streets again, the rostrum was brought to another place for the next show. The sale of tickets had been organized by clubs in various quarters of the town, but to keep even financial matters in old style every performance ended with all actors mixing with the crowd asking for a gift.

In the southern part of the Netherlands, in the province of Iimburg, there has even developed a semi-professional activity of amateurs. In Valkenburg, a summer resort, the wonderful open-air theatre sees long runs of musicals and light-opera. All artists are amateurs with a daytime job, but they get partly paid for their evening's work and their performances are worth it. This does not compete with the professional theatre which in summer does not tour these parts.

At Tegelen, the villagers, amateurs, stage a passion play, written by a local priest and produced every four years. Like their Oberammergau models, they grow beards and do not have their hair cut in the year of the performances and the whole village lives for the play only which draws thousands of visitors from

every part of Holland and even from foreign countries. It is perhaps interesting to mention that during the period of German occupation only one of the cast turned national-socialist, — it was the actor who played Judas!

There is little festival activity in Holland and we have nothing like the annual national festivals held by the British Drama League. From time to time a festival is organized by dramatic societies celebrating special occasions but the number of competing societies rarely exceeds six. Once a Belgian society took part but generally speaking we cannot do very much on an international basis for of all foreigners only the Belgian speak our language.

Nevertheless, there has been an interchange of companies between "De Plankeniers" and the Birmingham "Highbury Little Theatre". The former took their Dutch production of *Rembrandt* to England, the latter visited Bussum with two English mediaeval plays. The Dutch play was well chosen, for, though nobody could understand the dialogue, it was a costume play and about a Dutchman whom the whole world knows. To overcome the difficulty of language the contents of the play were told in English before every act.

It should, however, be possible to exchange companies on a basis giving more satisfaction to foreign hosts and, therefore, when I was invited to visit Bristol with my company next spring, I decided trying a play in English. This will of course take a much longer time in rehearsing but will be well worth it as it will no doubt create much goodwill with our English hosts.

Educational dramatics, widely known in the United States is new here. First, our universities do not teach dramatics. Their courses of literature are purely academic and do not lead to practical exercises. This does not mean that students never act. All student's corporations have their dramatic societies performing at odd times, especially in celebration of lustrums. These productions, directed by a professional, are generally worth while

as their elaborate productions are usually of a type rarely done by professionals or by other amateur companies.

The official curriculum of high schools does not yet include practical dramatics. There is, however, a tendency to get them legally prescribed. Nevertheless, pupils give one or two performances a year for which the school generally does a lot in an unofficial way. In many cases students get hours off to attend rehearsals and plays are studied in the classroom. In some schools a teacher directs, sometimes a professional is engaged. The plays are never modern ones and the few titles mentioned here may give an idea of the repertory: *Noah, Solomon and Joseph in Dothan* (Vondel), *Calderon's Life Is a Dream and Stage of the World*, Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors*, Aristophanes' *Clouds*, Molière's *Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, *Malade Imaginaire*, *Fourberies de Scapin* and *Médecin Malgré Lui* and Maeterlinck's *L'Oiseau Bleu*.

There is, however, one school at Bilthoven, "The Workshop Children's Community" (directed by C. Boeke) at which dramatics is considered a highly important part of general education. This is a unique type of school working on modified Montessori principles. It is also visited by our little princesses. It comprises an elementary school (ages 6-12) and a high school (ages 13-18). Many fine performances have been given under professional direction but some plays are directed by the children themselves. This is considered specially important, as the pedagogic value of dramatic expression is highly esteemed. Dramatics, therefore, forms a part of the regular courses. A few examples of actual productions are: *MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*, *TWELFTH NIGHT*, and *HAMLET* (under professional direction) and *THE SLIPPER OF ABU HASSAN* (an Oriental tale) performed and directed by children from 8-10 years only. Purcell's opera, *DIDO AND AENEAS*, was staged in English, and in ballet-form a very good performance was given of *THE PIED-PIPER OF HAMELIN*.

In concluding this article let me give an example of amateur activity on a very big scale, a pageant performed by the National Federation of young Catholic Labourers in the Olympic Stadium at Amsterdam in which 20,000 performers from all parts of the Netherlands co-operated. It treated several episodes of the time of German occupation and ended with a glorious défilé of banners before Cardinal de Jong. The various groups of performers first rehearsed their speaking-chorus in their hometowns. Initial preparations being over, two mass-rehearsals were held, every group staying at home. A few performers only rehearsed at the Hilversum studio's of the Catholic Broadcasting Corporation. This rehearsal was broadcast and the actors took part in it grouped around radio-sets in their rehearsal rooms. Last minute directions could thus be given to 20,000 people and everyone was perfectly acquainted with every detail when the dress rehearsal took place in the Olympic Stadium.



This scene occurred in the Senior Class play, *Annie Laurie*, staged under the direction of Edna D. Condon at the Huntington Beach, Calif., Union High School (Thespian Troupe 509).

Cinderella ballet used as a prologue to a production of **Tonight We Dance** at the Danville, Ill., High School (Thespian Troupe 59) with Helen Taylor as toe dancer. Directed by Mary Miller.



Occupational Opportunities in the Community Theatre

By TALBOT PEARSON

Department of Drama, Carnegie Institute of Technology, Pittsburgh, Pa.

ARTHUR Hopkins, the well-known and highly respected Broadway producer, recently stated that there are now a quarter of a million amateur producing groups in the United States. Mr. Hopkins was congratulating Charles MacArthur on the initiation of the new *Theatre Arts* magazine and expressing his conviction that "the professional theatre as a national institution has disappeared from America."

Mr. Hopkins may have exaggerated to prove his point. His guess is as good as that of anyone else. No exact figures are to be had on the subject, but even if a much smaller total — say one hundred thousand — is assumed, the non-profession theatre is a force to be reckoned with. It is already reckoned with by the publishers of plays and the authors who supply them with the properties which they rent to these groups. The make-up manufacturers and the costume rental houses also have large mailing lists and derive a considerable income from their services to amateur productions.

But if the members of the class of '48 have read Mr. Hopkins' article and assumed a job potential of the size indicated by the larger figure, they should be warned against over optimism. There may be that many groups, but they are not organized to the point of being able to employ salaried leaders or teachers. Any figure which seeks to include the "amateur" groups of the country must of necessity cover a wide variety of types of producing organizations. The play publisher does not ask whether the standard of the group is high, low or medium, provided its

This is the second article in a series of seven papers devoted to a discussion of occupational opportunities in the theatre.

We strongly urge our readers to follow this article with a reading of Mr. Pearson's book, *ENCORES ON MAIN STREET*, published by the Carnegie Press, Pittsburgh, Pa., wherein Mr. Pearson gives us a detailed account of the qualifications and talents required of the successful community theatre director, not to mention the demands, artistic, social, and physical, made of him. —

treasurer has the necessary funds to pay the price demanded for the privilege of performing the copyright work. The "amateur" group may be the local fire department, a boy scout troop or the campfire girls; it may be the well-established community theatre occupying its own plant and operating on a yearly budget running into the tens of thousands. Its production may have been directed by an enthusiastic volunteer from its own membership, a high school teacher devoting her precious evenings to the work, or — as in the case of the solidly established community theatre — by a qualified professional employed fulltime on an adequate salary. Mr. Hopkins' figure, and any estimate by a less eminent authority, must needs include all these types because, unfortunately, there has never been a census of the "Greater American Theatre". It would take the resources of the F.B.I. to get the actual figures and the job of classifying them would be beyond even that capable body of sleuths.

The melancholy fact is that far too much of this dramatic activity is sporadic, half-baked

and deplorably low in standards. Many groups could afford to employ salaried leaders but prefer to spend their surplus on extravagant rentals of costumes, on the purchase of scenery which is used for one production and then either sold at a terrific loss or put aside to gather dust. There are others who operate more modestly, playing to small audiences which are actually larger than they deserve to attract, who could improve their work enormously by taking advantage of professional, skilled assistance in the staging and mounting of their plays. At the moment they barely make ends meet, so their answer to the suggestion of adding any additional expenditure would be a horrified "no!" They have logic on their side, at first glance, but the records of the larger community groups show that it was only after these theatres began to employ the trained professional that their audiences showed steady growth and their operations could be conducted on a year-in, year-out basis.

Community Theatre Employment

WHAT, then, are the opportunities for employment in this "community theatre"? The larger groups give evidence of their stability by changing their leaders very infrequently. It is natural to think of Gilmor Brown when the Pasadena Theatre is mentioned, or of Frederic McConnell when the Cleveland Playhouse comes up. Both Mr. Brown and Mr. McConnell have maintained an unbroken record, each has occupied his post since these two theatres were founded more than thirty years ago. There are many others whose tenure of office adds up to fifteen or twenty years. Such theatres are not interested in making a change.

Many other theatres employ their directors on short-term contracts because they feel, we must suppose, that variety lends spice. Others would prefer to make no change by the directors, for one reason or another, do not want to stay, and so there are, in the spring of every year, a number of good jobs available to the properly qualified persons.

Adequate qualifications are of the utmost importance to an applicant for a post in the community theatre scheme. A good degree, from a school which has a theatre department and

does not merely offer a speech major with a little drama on the side, is absolutely essential. Yet it is only a prerequisite, because a knowledge of the details of production — acting, direction, costume and scene design — has to be combined with a number of other qualifications.

The details of business management, of promotion and public relations (in the real sense of that misused word) are "musts" in the equipment of the community leader. Psychology plays its part. The non-professionals who make up the casts and the crews are there to pursue an avocation. The threat of unemployment does not hang over their heads to compel them to good work. Nor are they working for credits, and so constrained to a certain obedience. They have to be inspired and coaxed to their highest achievements, by a leader who commands their respect because of a mastery of theatre craft and, equally important, because of affection his job and for his fellow workers.

To properly qualified theatre workers, therefore, there exist plenty of opportunities for employment, but it must be strongly insisted that the term qualifications goes beyond a mere completed course in drama. Certainly it must go beyond the playing of a few parts in productions at a liberal arts college or the possession of a speech degree. The young professional offering himself to a community group will be expected to be able to direct (that is, to produce a properly designed exposition of the author's intention) to coach the actors in speech, gesture, movement and style, to design costumes and sets, if need be; to light his own production and either to build the sets or show others how the work should be done. It's a large order, and the unqualified person is going to fail before he starts. Even some of those who are supposed to possess the proper training come to grief before they manage to adjust themselves.

Since the majority of community groups already have experienced directors and change is infrequent, the greatest possibilities for employment will be found in the smaller communities where there is already an established group which does not engage a paid director. More of these, every year, are seeing the light and realizing that better work will come from professional direction than from dependence upon volunteer leadership.

The enormous growth of the community theatre idea in the past ten years — and make no mistake, it is enormous — has meant much larger audiences and therefore increased income for most of the well-established community theatres. Many of them are now able to employ an assistant director, and a job of this kind is the best possible training for a more responsible post later on. It would be much more desirable to look for a job of this sort, where a young graduate's work would be done under the supervision of an older and more experienced director than to attempt to be the head man straight away.

At the present time there is a shortage of men and women for jobs as technical



Students Charles Lindberg, Louis Espe, and Jacquelin Salmon in a scene from *The Squire's Bride*, by Viola Van Zee and Charlotte B. Chorpennig, given at the North Central High School (Thespian Troupe 628), Spokane, Wash. Directed by Grace Gorton.

directors. Anyone who has had his principal college experience backstage may find plenty of opportunity in this field, and these posts pay good salaries. Besides they need not be blind alleys; many young technical directors move up every year to more responsible positions.

Salaries

SALARIES are not enormous, but they are usually well-secured and on a seasonal basis. The customary period of contract is for nine months, the length of the average season of fall and winter operations. This arrangement leaves the community worker free to accept a summer stock appointment by the first of June or thereabouts.

Community theatre work ranks as educational and is, therefore, not too highly recompensed. Most groups will expect to be able to engage an assistant for around fifteen or sixteen hundred dollars for the nine-month season; some pay as much as twenty-two hundred. A capable technical director can command more and salaries for this branch of work are reported recently up to thirty-three hundred dollars. In general a community group will pay as generously as its budget permits, being more interested in the happiness and security of its professional workers than in the making of "profits".

Variations in the salary scale for the director are even greater. The compensation for the leaders themselves may start at about the top figure for technical

workers and go to six thousand dollars or even more. But these are "Truman dollars" and there is no retirement plan or participation in social security. These may be drawbacks sufficient to make a college teaching salary look almost as attractive by comparison, but it is well to remember that in the community field the scope is unlimited. Results such as increased patronage are entitled to reward in the shape of increased salary and most community groups are willing to show their appreciation of good and productive work. So the possibilities are, theoretically at least, quite limitless.

Placement Service

THE best medium for contact with the community theatres is the National Theatre Conference, whose headquarters are at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. The Conference maintains a very active and efficient placement service and most community groups in need of personnel now look to the NTC files for the people they need. It is well for every theatre worker to have his or her qualifications on file with the Conference Placement Service, which is conducted without charge to the applicant, either employer or employee.

And if there seem to be no jobs open, or no theatre operating in the region where you want to work — what then? The answer is obvious; start one of your own. If there is no theatre in your home town, there should be. We are agreed on that. If you have the proper qualifications — not merely courage or recklessness, or desperation — and feel you have the ability to guide and lead people to do things beyond their imagination, then you should get under way without delay. There are no set rules about organization. Every community is a law unto itself. But every community will contain a few people interested in a cultural venture.

Thespian Kerry Prescott of the Salinas, California, Union High School (Troupe 501) and Charlyn Ryan of the Evanston, Ill., Township High School were awarded a Thespian cash prize of \$5.00 each for their outstanding performances in the dramatic night program sponsored in August by the Northwestern University High School Institute. Each student also received a year's subscription for *DRAMATICS* magazine. The presentation was made by Thespian Senior Councilor Marion V. Stuart of the Champaign, Ill., Senior High School.

Theatre Costumes and Popular Taste

By LUCY BARTON

Department of Drama, University of Texas, Austin, Texas

OF all the arts which appeal to the eye, theatre is the most easily comprehended by the general public, because it is closest to everyday human experience. Theatrical costumes are, therefore, a good barometer of popular taste, as being on the one hand of the moment and on the other, quickly outmoded. Those artists who dress successful theatrical shows, from burlesque to grand opera, must sense what their public will take and not depart too far in either direction from the contemporary sense of beauty, comicality, or decency. Nothing is more difficult to analyze than the taste of today; nothing more hazardous than to predict the taste of tomorrow.

Probably few young people can imagine why, in the year 1948, the "new look" appeared as it seemed full-blown, with no warning, and was accepted after only the briefest struggle. Possibly, if you will look back at the stage successes of the years immediately past, you will see how our eyes have grown accustomed to small waists, rounded hips, long full skirts, billowing petticoats. Who knows what will come next? Possibly, if you look sharply at the next crop of costume plays, especially musicals, you will be able to discern a new silhouette in the making, the reminiscence of a period different from those that have already been stressed; that may be the new cloud on the horizon of fashion, the shape of things to come.

This influence of the theatre does not mean that the theatre makes the taste; rather, sensing both current taste and the signs of change, it gives the public in more picturesque form what fashion designers provide in practical modifications. Not pushing too far ahead, not too far behind, theatre costumes must please the paying public.

Even the greatest actors cannot go too fast for their audiences. Take the costumes of the French actor in Heroic Tragedy. Through three centuries tradition dictated that he wear certain garments derived from the "antique", plus towering ostrich plumes. Originally, the costume had borne some resemblance to that of a Roman soldier, but by the middle of the eighteenth century it was distinguished principally by a short skirt, actually held out by hoops, worn over flesh-colored tights and fancy boots. Even the good sense of Voltaire (who did much to reform the theatre) could not free the tragic actor from this ridiculous encumbrance. Eventually, the Revolution and the subsequent violent change in feminine fashions got rid of the hoop-skirt. Talma, the great actor who survived from the old regime and adapted his art to the changed world of the Directoire, pioneered in the wearing of "Roman" costumes in his classic roles. He even went so far as to discard tights and appear barelegged. His public accepted the Roman tunics, but bare legs were more than the Directoire could take, and back came the tights. Throughout the nineteenth century, although a passion for historical accuracy was dictating the designs for stage costumes, no man considered coming out on the boards barelegged. During a century and a quarter of relentless classicism, when the stage Caesar, Brutus, Coriolanus and the other noble Romans would not think of appearing without their white tunics and togas with purple borders, they still covered their manly limbs with noticeably-pinkish tights, silk if possible, but too often cotton. Up to a short time ago audiences placidly accepted this convention for bare skin, though wrinkled tights were always good for a cartoonist's fun-poking. Only after the general public took to sunbathing on beaches and changing into shorts, not just for hiking and tropical soldiering but also for lolling on the front porch, did the popular actor venture to stride upon the stage unshod.

Similarly, when the traditional ballet acquired its characteristic stamp in the early nineteenth century stockings were an essential part of the costume. During the century, as the full tarletane *tutu* grew shorter and shorter, stockings grew longer and longer. When dance reformers came along in the trail of Isadora Duncan, what struck people most was that they were "bare-foot dancers".

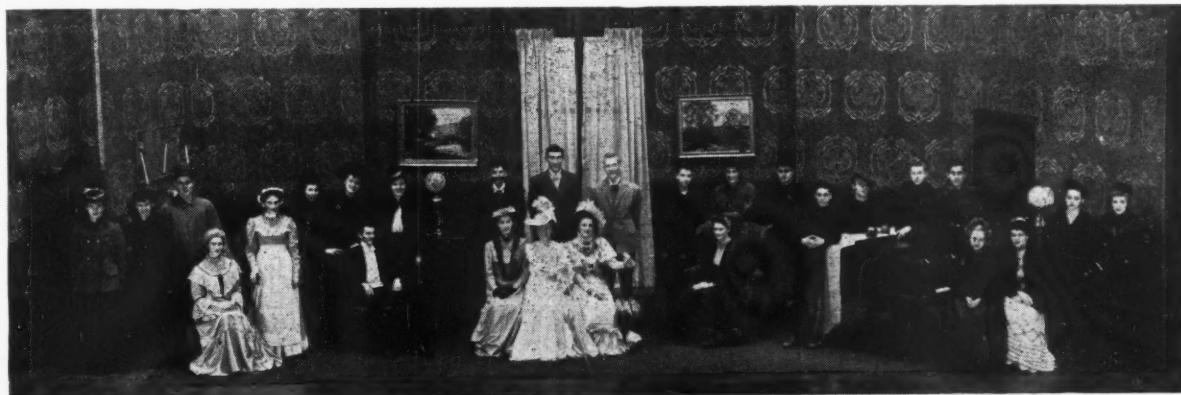
Nowadays, when any girl in city or country can take her stockings or leave them, even the ballerina in her traditional *tutu* saves time, money, and worry about runs and wrinkles by going bare. Practically nobody is shocked for relative nudity is a commonplace in real life, and the shock value of legs is practically nil.

One of the characteristics of stage costume has always been audacity, both the degree of audacity and the way it is expressed depending on what is currently considered "in good taste." Thus the moral tone of the times strongly influence stage costume. In any period, audiences generally like to see actresses dressed in a fashion more daring than the feminine portion would risk or the masculine would approve. Audience interpretation of the word "daring" varies not only with the time but also the place. Even now, when country and city see the same fashion books and buy the same ready-made models, the sense of decorum in one community differs from that in another, so that the wise director permits upon his stage only those costumes which are within the bounds of what is locally considered good taste.

More fundamental than the current morality or current ideals of beauty is the overall pendulum swing, that deep slow rhythm of living which carries us all from the enjoyment of one extreme of sense stimulus to the other — in music, in literature, in the visual arts (including furnishings and dress). There is always a long period during which taste while clinging to one extreme is already almost imperceptibly reaching out for its opposite. One of the ways in which taste starts to go into the reverse swing is paroxysmally a revulsion against that past taste which eventually we shall again embrace.

Take, for example, our present revulsion against feminine styles of the First Empire, that is the Neo-Greek of Napoleon's reign. About a decade ago a good play dealing with Napoleon, excellently acted, well staged and costumed, was able to achieve only a moderate success. Four years ago a university theatre revival of Barrie's *QUALITY STREET* met with the same tepid reception. It is not too much to say that in both those plays the cos-

Entire cast for the presentation of Shaw's *Pygmalion* at the William Penn Senior High School, York, Pa., (Thespian Troupe 520). Directed by Leon C. Miller.





Scene from a production of **Dona Rosita** given by the Drama Department of the University of Texas. Directed by James Moll. Costumes designed by Lucy Barton.

tumes of the period were partly responsible for audience indifference. No girl on the stage or out front thought that short waists, column-like tubular skirts, round necks, and baby sleeves had any charm; and the men thought them downright dowdy. Most of this modern aversion can be laid to the lack of a defined waist-line, distasteful to a public conditioned to increasing emphasis on the double curve of bust-waist-hip. The last time we accepted "Empire" styles as high fashion was between the years 1910 and 1914; as might be expected the plays popular in those years included **QUALITY STREET**, **POMANDER WALK**, **PRUNELLA**, and **MME. SANS-GENE**, all laid in the years of the First Empire, the early 1800's. Sooner or later the swinging pendulum will carry us back to a liking for the slender reed, the lily on a long green stem, and then our popular plays including musicals will be set in the period 1810 or more likely 1910.

As always the pendulum was swinging. Even in the midst of the Empire revival, at that very moment when taste was reiterating that high waistlines and no hips were lovely, a first hint, a sort of foreshadowing of change, stole into the theatre. George Arliss presented his popular play, *Disraeli*, carefully costumed in the 1870's, about forty years before the time of his production. The villainess, very sexy as befooved a lady spy, wore a bustle. Such contraptions were outmoded about 1888; this was perhaps the first attempt since then to convince an audience that a bustle

could help rather than hinder the career of a siren, and the audience took the costume with mixed feelings. Even women who had worn such things forty years before wondered how they could ever have thought them chic, because they and their male contemporaries had relegated such a get-up to comic valentine spinsters. Young people giggled, but marvelled that anything so "quaint" and no doubt uncomfortable could be worn with such an air. The costume was a success, if only as a reminder of how far we had progressed in good taste and common sense.

Thirty years after that production, the biggest hit of the modern theatre, **LIFE WITH FATHER**, owed a good deal of its popularity to the feminine wardrobes, which were very much like that of the **DISRAELI** villainess. This time, however, the ladies in the audience could easily imagine themselves wearing "Mother's" dresses; and now, in 1948, they practically are. The pendulum has swung slowly; it took thirty years to bring us to a full acceptance of this artificial mode which at the present are savoring fully. We are taking from it all we can use in our changed world and are already on our way toward the next phase of taste.

Right now the theatre is full of plays new and revived which, set in the years between 1880 and 1905, afford costume designers a chance to touch the strings of memory. The family

Richard Weir, 26, Riverside, Ill., was first recipient of the newly-created Fred Tuerk-Joseph Nellis Scholarship for a student of Theatre Arts at Denison University, Granville, Ohio, to spend a month in studying and observing the mechanics of motion picture production in Hollywood, Cal.f., Professor Edward A. Wright has announced.

A junior at Denison, Weir spent the month of August as guest of the major motion picture studios, making the offices of Independent Artists his headquarters. He had the opportunity of following the production from the inception of story development through the making of the picture and the processing of the film in the cutting and scoring departments.

Weir has returned to Denison University to continue his liberal arts study toward a major in Theatre Arts. For the past year he was assistant electrician in the Denison University Theatre and in the Denison Summer Theatre.

photograph album, once an object of derision, has come down from the attic to serve as source material for the designer's research. When the prettiness as well as the quaintness of bustles had been well established, the flood of nostalgia for horse-and-buggy days led designers to revive the styles of the 1890's. (It seems only yesterday that those were good for a laugh anywhere.) A step further and here we are approving on the stage the pompadour, the pleated shirt-waist, the high collar of the Gibson Girl, and from that to imitating some of those details in campus styles. This year an audience sees more to admire than to scorn in the fluffy blouses, the "kangaroo bend", and the billowing petticoats of Harrison Fisher's elegant ladies. The recent production at the University of Texas of Garcia Lorca's *Dona Rosita* found audiences really enjoying the spinsters, dressed in an exaggeration of the mode of 1902 (see picture). Moreover, those actresses thought they looked rather charming and vowed they enjoyed wearing the long, heavily-boned corsets into which each evening they were laced. For corsets, too, are on the way in.

Your *Oklahoma!*, your *Carousel*, your *High Buttoned Shoes* are successful in large part because the costumes are reminiscent of a period which admired in the feminine figure what we also admire. Even the popularity of Shaw revivals like *Man and Superman* and of Oscar Wilde's *Lady Windermere's Fan* owe something to their congenial costumes. Just entering upon markedly different styles as we are, it will be a while before time, circumstances, the swing of the pendulum conspire to shift our taste toward other ideals of chic and pulchritude; but of one thing we may be sure: as the pendulum taste swings in its appointed rhythm, the theatre will swing with it, giving the public what it wants today, subtly leading it toward what it will want tomorrow.



Thespian Troupe 740's production of **Ten Little Indians** staged under the direction of L. M. Tucker. Howe, Indiana, Military School.

Make-up Colors and Contours

By CARL B. CASS

School of Drama, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma

Painted Contours

WHEN an artist paints a picture on any flat surface, he must suggest depth and contour by means of line perspective and distribution of painted highlights and shadows. In make-up, we are not concerned with line perspective but we are very much concerned with the proper distribution of highlights and shadows which will give to an observer an impression of shape or contour.

In portrait painting, an artist uses highlights and shadows to create an impression of facial contours where no real contours exist. In a portrait, the nose seems to jut out from the rest of the face, the brows protrude, the eyes recede, and the lips are gently rounded; yet the picture itself is perfectly flat. If you study a portrait, you will see that a source of light is suggested, and that that part of any feature receiving a direct beam of light from the suggested source is distinctly lighter in color, while the part that curves away or is shaded from the light source is distinctly darker in color. Hence we get the impression of shape or contour.

The placement of highlights and shadows in any picture will always depend upon both the theoretic source of light and the contour suggested. If, for example, a face is to be painted with the source of light from its right side, the right side of the nose will be highlighted and the left side will be shaded. Another picture of the same face might be painted with the source of light and the highlights and shadows exactly reversed. In each case the angle at which the suggested light strikes the face is fixed and unchanging, so that the fixed highlights and shadows are perfectly natural. But let us consider for a moment a motion picture with a fixed source of light and a moving actor. If the actor turns his face in relation to the source of light, the highlights and shadows should move. Yet we know that highlights and shadows that are painted cannot be made to move.

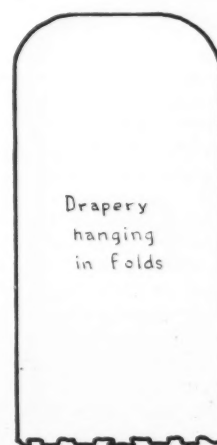
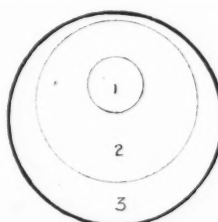
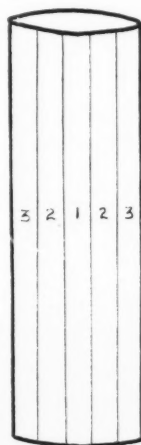
In make-up we try to eliminate, as much as possible, the obvious inconsistencies of fixed, painted highlights and shadows on the faces of moving actors by adopting a fixed theoretic source of light which is always the same and which will always result in a strictly symmetrical distribution of highlights and shadows on both sides of a face. This fixed source of light we imagine to be straight in front of and slightly above the face. With such a fixed source of light in mind, the placement of highlights and shadows is not difficult. Any part of a curved surface that would receive a direct beam of light from the source should be highlighted, and any other part of that surface that is curved away or is shaded from the light source should receive a shadow. Any relatively

light color may be used as a highlight; and any relatively dark color may be used as a shadow. Exactly how light and how dark the highlights and shadows should be will depend upon so many variable factors — such as the color and intensity of stage lights, the need for projection, and the environmental colors — that each individual applying make-up can learn to estimate specific needs only through experience and careful observation. In general, however, we may say that to give an impression of gently rounded surfaces, we use colors for highlights and shadows that are only slightly contrasting and we must blend them subtly; and, to give the impression of a folded or sharply curved surface, on the other hand, we must use strongly contrasting colors and blend them more abruptly.

In make-up the problem of painting highlights and shadows on the face is somewhat complicated by the fact that we must attempt to superimpose painted contours over real contours. Consequently, our painted highlights and shadows will merely supplement real highlights and shadows. The average student of make-up tends to confuse real and painted contours to such an extent that he is seldom more than vaguely conscious of his errors in painting. No matter how inaccurate his painted contours may be, the real contours of the face are still apparent to him and he is, therefore far too well satisfied with his results. For this reason, it is recommended that any person who wishes to learn to use make-up effectively should first learn to paint contours on flat surfaces where the quality of his painting will be more apparent to him. In these early practice periods, however, he should always keep in mind the fixed source of light used in make-up — straight in front and slightly above the object to be painted.

Lesson 1

The painting of a few simple objects on paper or cardboard will give you some experience in using the proper distribution of highlights and shadows.



This is the second in a series of articles outlining a course of practice in stage make-up. The course is designed to provide a guide for an active process of learning by doing. It is based upon the theory that skill in the use of make-up depends, not upon memorized formulas which tell what materials to use and how to apply them, but upon a keen perception and good judgment that can be developed only by a person himself through continued practice and critical observation.

The first article was concerned with the choice of materials and the mixing and blending of colors. The present article covers the painting of contours by the proper use of highlights and shadows and the first steps in developing a judgment of the proper complexion colors to use in applying specific make-ups.

In such exercises, you will be able to detect your own errors in painting with relative ease; and when you can see an error, you can usually find some way of correcting it. It is only the error that you cannot see that you will be utterly unable to correct.

Procedure — Paint the objects in the figure below. First, sketch lightly the outline of an object with lead pencil on paper or cardboard. A piece of corrugated pasteboard from an old packing box is recommended. The size of the outline is not important, except that it is advisable to make it large enough so that it can be painted easily with a finger. A cylinder eight inches long and two inches wide and a ball four inches in diameter should be about the most convenient size.

When the outline of the object is complete, cover it with any medium make-up color. Then over this basic color apply a lighter color for the highlight and blend carefully. Finally, apply a darker color for shadow and blend it just as carefully. For a description of blending refer back to the first article in this series.

On the sketches of the cylinder and ball, the areas to be covered with highlight (area 1), basic color (area 2), and shadow (area 3) are indicated by means

of fine lines. In painting the vase and drapery, however, each student should be able to determine the proper location of highlights, basic colors, and shadows for himself.

If the painted objects appear misshapen, the fault will be in the placement or blending of colors. If, on the other hand, any painted object seems too flat or unrounded, the fault will be in the lack of sufficient contrast between the colors used for highlights and shadows.

Repeat the process of painting each object until you are perfectly satisfied with your results.

Choice of Make-Up Colors

Students of make-up are constantly asking, "What color shall I use?" Such a question is perfectly natural; but since it indicates a lack of basic color judgment, it is a question that each student must learn to answer himself.

The proper colors to be used for the make-up of any stage character will depend upon many variable factors such as: the climate in which the play is set; the age, nationality, health, and amount of out-of-door activity of the character himself; and the color and intensity of the stage lights, the colors of hair and costume which will surround the face, and the average distance at which the character will be seen by the audience.

The effects of some of these variable factors — climate, age, nationality, health, and amount of out-of-door activity — may be estimated rather easily by any normally observant student. But the effects of stage lights, distance, and surrounding colors must be learned by means of careful observation under varying stage conditions. Although good color judgment cannot be developed rapidly, it is advisable that any student of make-up should become fully aware of the nature of this basic color problem early.

Lesson 2

The objective of this lesson is to observe various basic colors (including grease paint and rouge colors) under varying stage conditions, in order that each student may form a consciousness of the factors involved in choosing proper make-up colors. This lesson will necessitate a great deal of experimentation in which conditions are carefully controlled. Many readers may find it impossible to carry out the experiments as described. If so, they may be able to devise a similar series of experiments. Otherwise they will have to acquire color judgments more slowly through experience and close observation.

Procedure — If you work with a large group, actual stage conditions may be approximated in any large darkened room or auditorium where a few stage lights can be rigged up and controlled by dimmers. As much as 2000 watts at close range covering a small area is recommended. A 1000 watt flood light and two 500 watt spot lights hung about ten feet from the floor

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and covering the same area would be ideal.

First, apply to at least six girls various complexion colors (ranging from very pale to deep sun tan) which are presumed to be appropriate for young women on the stage. It will be necessary, of course, to mix grease paints, lining colors, and perhaps some rouge to get a sufficient variety of complexion colors.

Directions for Applying Soft Grease Paint — When using soft grease paints, it is not necessary to put on a preliminary application of cold cream, although some may prefer it. If cold cream is applied, the face should be wiped clean before applying the soft grease.

Applying soft grease paint is very simple. The error most commonly made is that of applying too much. A quantity equivalent to one fourth inch of paint as it is squeezed from a tube is sufficient. With one finger, apply the grease in approximately ten to fifteen little dabs evenly distributed over the face; then spread the paint evenly by rubbing gently with both hands as though you were washing the face. In applying paint to the forehead, keep the dabs low or well away from the hairline; then spread over the lower half of the forehead and blend it towards the hairline so that it fades out just as it reaches the hair.

After the basic color has been spread evenly, apply and blend rouge on the cheeks and rouge the lips. The process of applying rouge properly will be discussed fully in a later article. Here we are only interested in the study of various colors under different stage conditions. Finally, powder the face by patting powder generously with a powder puff and then removing the excess powder with a face brush or the back of the puff.

When the basic colors and rouge have been applied to all the girls, line them up together under the lights, which should be white and at full

brilliance. Observe carefully at various distances the complexion colors of each girl and note your preferences.

Then using pieces of differently colored cloth (white, black, red, green, yellow, and blue) drape the head and shoulders, surrounding the face of each girl, and note the effect upon your impression of their respective complexion colors. Change the colors draped over each girl until you have selected the make-up colors you prefer with each surrounding color. It would be preferable to have enough pieces of cloth of the same colors to drape all similarly at one time.

The process just described is the basic experiment which should be repeated many times, each time varying one of the conditions as follows:

1. Dim the lights to half intensity and repeat the experiment.
2. Dim the lights to low intensity and repeat again.
3. Change the color of the lights by placing framed gelatines over each and repeat the experiment under as many different colors as time, patience, and your supply of colored gelatines will permit.
4. Repeat the whole process using boys made up with a variety of complexion colors which you assume to be appropriate for young men.
5. If time and patience will allow further experimentation, repeat with basic colors which you think are appropriate for men and women of various ages, nationalities, and conditions of health.

An individual working alone or with a very small group may carry out similar experiments with make-up colors on paper or cardboard and with less light at closer range. Even a flashlight and some odd pieces of colored gelatine may do. A large spot of basic color on paper may be viewed through a hole cut in colored paper. The effects of changing conditions may be observed in this way, although, of course, it will not be easy to judge exactly which colors are the most appropriate as complexion colors unless the are actually applied to the face.

The experiments described here are long and involved. Whether they are carried out entirely or in part is up to the reader; but it should be understood that color judgment is extremely important to anyone who wishes to learn to apply make-up effectively. No written directions indicating the proper colors to use for specific types of make-up will apply to all stage-conditions. Without some kind of experiment, several years of normal make-up experience may be required to develop even an elementary judgment of the best make-up colors to use under different stage conditions.

(The next make-up article will describe a process of portrait painting using make-up materials. Such a process provides a pleasant hobby as well as a valuable means of developing skill in make-up while avoiding the messy process of applying make-up to the face. The article will also include a discussion of the problems involved in applying various types of so-called straight make-up.)

Two Christmas Plays

By Elizabeth McFadden

TIDINGS OF JOY

Theme: A present-day Joseph and Mary with their baby are to be evicted from their home on Christmas Eve. Parts: 12 boys (may be reduced to 6 by combining minor parts), 6 girls, extras only if desired. Time: 40 minutes. Scene: plain interior. Costumes: ordinary dress, or Scout uniforms. Music: lovely old carols.

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Price, each play, 40 cents Royalty, \$5.00

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Mention Dramatics

Showboat Theatre Is Born

By G. HARRY WRIGHT

Drama Department, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio

WHEN the final curtain rang down on *Ten Nights in a Bar-room* aboard the Showboat MAJESTIC moored at the foot of Lawrence Street, Cincinnati, Ohio, on the night of September 15, it brought to a close one of the most remarkable theatrical ventures ever attempted by a college group. For these Kent State University students had revived the real old-time showboat, and had brought back to the people of the river towns the glamorous entertainment of a half century ago. (See article in our October issue.)

They had traveled the entire navigable length of the Kanawha River, and up and down the Ohio from East Liverpool to Cincinnati, playing everything from one-night stands at tiny river settlements to two-week engagements in the cities. They had completed a season of fourteen and one-half weeks, giving 92 performances before upwards of 35,000 customers. In addition to earning university credit and getting unique training in show business, they had made the whole project pay. The closing that night, before the largest and most enthusiastic audience of the season, was a historic event.

But this was not the first historic event that had occurred on the Ohio river at the foot of Lawrence Street. And it was no accident that this spot was chosen as the scene of the last engagement of the season for the world's last showboat. For here, in this self-same spot, seventy years ago, the first modern showboat was built. Here she took to the water and commenced her first cruise down the Ohio and the Mississippi to the sunny Southland. Here, in the humblest circumstances possible, was born an institution which was to grow and bring infinite joy and wonder to the river folk, and then to die, leaving hardly a trace. It was fitting that the revived showboat should return to the birthplace of her original ancestor. It was planned that way.

The man who built that first showboat at the foot of Lawrence Street, and who during a career of nearly a quarter of a century as a manager of river theatricals owned altogether five showboats, was known to the world as Augustus Byron French. He was born in Palmyra, Missouri, a small town very near the Mississippi River, in 1832. Early in life he was left an orphan, and compelled to shift for himself. He wandered over to the river when he was about 16, and took a job on a river steamer bound for New Orleans.

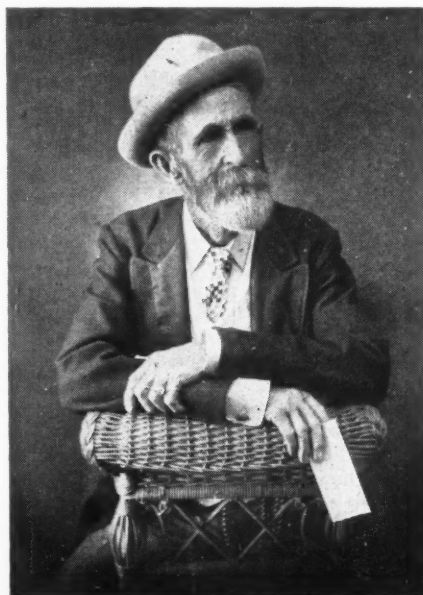
At a landing in Mississippi he saw tied up near the steamboat a tiny shanty boat with the name QUICKSTEP painted on her side. Consumed with curiosity, young French went over to visit the little boat. There he found a Mr. Church and his daughter Celeste. Church was a magician, and Celeste sang and danced. They would tie up at a landing, go ashore and give their little show in a shed, barn, or wher-

ever they could find an empty room and get permission to use it. It was a precarious existence, but it appealed to the young orphan, especially since his lot was not too happy in the kitchen of the steamer, where he labored under the baleful eye of a rather disagreeable cook. He joined the Churches as a banjo player, singer, and dancer. He and Celeste sang duets and did a dancing act together, and this, together with his banjo playing and Mr. Church's magic, made quite a little show.

Young French stayed with the Churches about two years, then traveled for a time on the big circus boats of Spaulding and Rogers and Dan Rice.

From that time on, the idea of owning a boat and a river show was uppermost in his mind. With the coming of war between the States all floating entertainment was swept from the rivers, and French traveled with wagon shows, but always he cherished his plan of some day building a showboat. He had learned all of Church's magic tricks, and finally went out with a little magic show of his own, which he called FRENCH'S NEW SENSATION.

It ought to be explained here that French was not really this young man's name. His real name was Augustus Byron Dolen, but at some point in his career as a showman, he changed to French—just why, nobody knows. It is known that his mother was a native of New Orleans, and of French descent. Then, too, he was a great admirer of the French people and of French culture. These facts may have influenced his decision to change, but it is quite probable that he made the change because



Augustus Byron French

he considered French a better theatrical name than Dolen.

In 1869 he came to the little town of Waterloo, Ohio, to give a show. There he bought a half interest in a small grocery store and attempted to settle down. But French was still a showman at heart. Frequently, when business in the store was bad, he and his partner would go out for two or three weeks at a time giving their magic show in school houses and town halls. In 1879 they moved their store to Clarksburg, Ohio, and French finally bought his partner out and made a real success of the business. Still the showman inside him would not rest, and in the spring of 1878 he took an option on a small circus. In June of that year he married Miss Callie Leach. That was a remarkable union. French was nearly 46, and Callie was only 16. Yet their marriage was a complete success, and they worked together with mutual sympathy and understanding until French's death 24 years later.

By the first of July they had the circus all painted up and ready to travel. They called it FRENCH'S NEW SENSATION.

Then the rains came. Every day, it seemed, the downpour became heavier. Anyone who has traveled with tent and wagon shows knows how miserable such an existence can be in bad weather, with tents blowing over and collapsing under the weight of water, wagons getting stuck in mudholes, and drenched customers angrily demanding their money back. French was a man who had a deep concern for the comfort of his patrons. Every day he became more unhappy and impatient.

Finally, early one morning after a particularly devastating storm, he looked about in utter disgust. Trunks and other paraphernalia were floating about; costumes were a sodden mass. His young bride was shivering with cold.

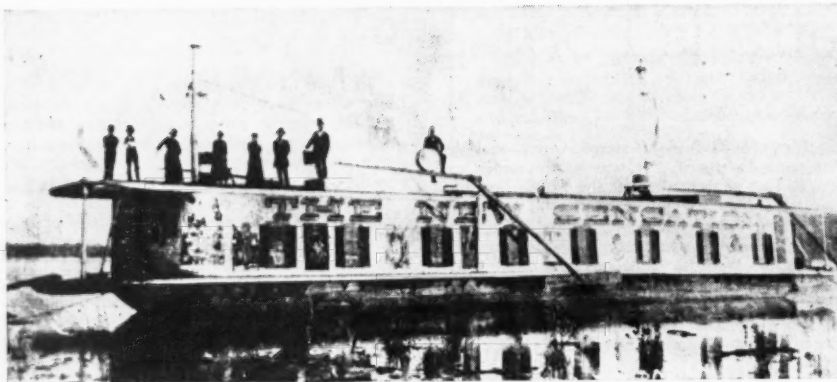
"I'm going to turn this outfit in and go to Cincinnati and build a showboat," he said. Then, after a few well-chosen titbits of colorful profanity, he added, "If we have to float, we're going to have something to float on."

Callie was quick to agree. She didn't know what a showboat was—had never seen a boat or the river. But she knew that it could not be worse than this.

They began to load, and by night the circus days were over and the Frenches were getting ready to go to Cincinnati.

There they bought a barge 16 by 85 feet in size, had it towed to the landing at the foot of Lawrence Street, and began the laborious job of building America's first showboat. It was a long and tedious process, and not without its difficulties, for French had very little money. But by late autumn the new boat was finished, and ready for the perilous voyage down the river. She was named—yes, you've guessed it—FRENCH'S NEW SENSATION.

The NEW SENSATION was truly an odd-looking craft. Long, narrow, and wearing an over-all coat of gleaming white paint trimmed in maroon, she stood out in striking contrast to the tiny unpainted shanty boats and tugs tied up near her. Her single-deck cabin ex-



French's first showboat, **The New Sensation**

tended over the entire length and width of the barge upon which it had been built. Eight windows, with bright pea-green trim and shutters, were cut in each side. Between the windows were large pictures of birds, beasts, jugglers, acrobats, characters from classical drama, and freaks from far parts of the world painted in many vivid colors. Above the windows, in letters three feet tall extending the entire length of the cabin, was printed the name, **THE NEW SENSATION**.

At bow and stern, deck flooring and roof extended beyond the ends of barge and cabin, making a small covered porch at each end of the boat. On the roof amidships were mounted two enormous sweeps or oars, one on either side. They were on swivels, and were so arranged that the crew members, by pushing the long handles on the roof, could move the paddles, which were attached to long poles reaching down to the water. At the stern, a similar sweep served as a rudder, or steering oar. Two stubby masts, one forward and one aft, stood upright from the roof. Along each side of the **SENSATION** from bow to stern at lower deck level, extended a runway about two feet in width, known as the "guard".

The main entrance in front led into a narrow corridor with a tiny stateroom on each side. The corridor opened into the auditorium or theatre, which occupied most of the boat. It was a long, narrow room, fitted with rows of benches for the customers. The six rows nearest the stage were slightly padded and covered with striped ticking. They were to be reserved seats, at ten cents above the general admission price of twenty-five cents.

The auditorium floor slanted from the back downward toward the stage, but instead of ending in an orchestra pit, as would be the case in a modern theatre, it ended in a level space, to be used for acrobatic and tumbling acts. Beyond this space rose the tiny elevated stage. It boasted a front curtain of red and white checkered tablecloth material. There was no scenery.

Behind the stage, extending across the entire width of the boat, was a large room, to be occupied by Mr. and Mrs. French. Behind this was the kitchen, which opened on to the back porch.

While building the boat, the Captain (for so we may now call him, since he is in command of a vessel) had also been very busy on another project—gathering a company of performers. When completed, the troupe consisted of eight persons. Besides the Frenches, they were Mr. and Mrs. (Ed and Caroline) DeHass, globe rollers; Ned Martin, Irish comedian; Fred Webb, dulcimer player; Maurice Dolen, black-face comedian; and Newton Mowry, singer of comic songs. Captain French himself completed the acting company with a headline act consisting of magic, ventriloquism, and banjo playing. Callie French was not as yet a stage performer.

At last all was ready, and on Sunday, November 3, 1878, Captain French and his little company cast off the lines, poled the **SENSATION** away from the shore, and set off on their long voyage south. This first showboat, it must be remembered, had no mechanical means of propulsion—no engine, no paddle wheel, no towboat. She depended entirely upon the current of the river to carry her along. The big sweeps on the sides, when manned by the entire company, were useful in steering the craft around obstructions, and in working into and away from landings, but they were not capable of propelling the boat. Captain French was anxious to get as far south as he could in the shortest possible time, for winter was coming on and he knew that the river would soon be full of floating ice, capable of cutting and crushing his frail craft to splinters.

The first serious trouble came at Louisville, Kentucky, when the **SENSATION** encountered the dangerous falls of the Ohio River. The falls were not safe for navigation even for boats powered by steam and manned by experienced river men. The little **SENSATION**, with her crew of actors totally untrained in the ways of the river stood small chance of getting over the rapids in safety. True there was a canal around the falls, but at that time it was owned by a private company, and the charge for going through was prohibitive. Captain French simply did not have the money.

At last a pilot appeared who claimed to know every rock and eddy in the falls, and he offered to steer the **SENSATION** through for five dollars. It was a fearful chance, and Captain French knew it, but he had no choice. It was make the try or give up his showboat cruise altogether. He hired the pilot, and the

SENSATION headed into the churning rapids. Some time later, battered but whole, she came out on the lower side, and the trip downstream continued.

History does not record in detail the terrifying adventures of that first trip down the Ohio. Alternately windbound, fogbound, stranded upon sandbars, and overtaken by floating ice, the little company struggled on. Often there was not enough to eat, and sometimes it was a problem just to keep warm.

Finally, late in December, more than seven weeks after leaving Cincinnati, the **NEW SENSATION** pulled in below two big flat rocks at Elizabethtown, Illinois, for protection from the floating ice, and there, on Christmas night, 1878, Captain French and his exhausted but courageous company gave the first performance ever to be presented from the stage of a showboat in America.

No details of that performance have come down to us. So far as is known, not a single member of the company or of the audience is living today. But we do know that it was an unpretentious little variety show consisting of globe rolling, monologues, music, dancing, and magic. And it is to be hoped that the good people of Elizabethtown were generous in their patronage.

After leaving Elizabethtown to hurry on southward, the **NEW SENSATION** ran into more trouble. Caught in the ice floes which by now filled the river, she was saved from being crushed to bits near Cairo, Illinois, only by the heroic intervention of a steam tug which, after repeated tries, managed to pull her to shore and safety at the Cairo landing. Here some of Captain French's actors, having had more than their fill of the rigors and dangers of river life, deserted the company. Not daunted, Captain French, with the help of an old circus friend living in Cairo, gave his little show as best he could.

One night there was a sudden fall in the river, and the **SENSATION** was left sitting at a crazy angle, one side in the water and the other high and dry on shore. The show went on just the same, although both performers and audience had to sit or stand "on the bias" to keep from sliding to the low side of the boat.

Early in 1879 the river rose, so that the boat was floating again, and the little company continued the journey from the Ohio into the Mississippi and on southward toward New Orleans, playing, when possible, at the little settlements which dotted both sides of the river. It was all very uncertain and unpredictable. When fog blanketed the water, as it frequently did at that time of year, the actors could not see to steer the boat; and when a strong wind was blowing, there was nothing to do but make for the bank and tie up—that is, if the boat could be maneuvered to a safe place before running aground on a bar or crashing into a rock. Sometimes, when luck was good, performances would be given several nights in succession. At other times, days or weeks would be spent in battling

with the elements, with no chance to give a performance at all.

Despite all misadventures, however, the SENSATION finally reached New Orleans in safety; and what is more remarkable, Captain French had a modest sum of money in his pocket. Here the company spent about two weeks resting, seeing the sights of the city, shopping, and tasting the joys of warm baths and other civilized comforts not to be found on the showboat.

Then Captain French contracted with Captain McClure of the coal boat SMOKY CITY for a tow back up the river. The SENSATION was tied to the side of the big steamer, along with other craft desiring to be towed to points on the Ohio, and the trip north began.

The Captain had plenty of time to think on the slow voyage upstream—plenty of time to reflect upon the trials to which he had subjected himself, his company, and most of all, his young bride. He had time to ask himself over and over, whether the meagre returns of show boating on the river were equal to the hardships and risks involved. Perhaps he talked it over with Callie. We do not know; for, although Captain French kept a faithful record every day on the river, his diary for that period has been lost. Certain it is, however, that in the end he determined to go on with his showboat, and he laid plans for a second cruise south which was to be bigger and more ambitious than the first. Probably there was never a moment of doubt in his mind, for Captain French was a man of vision and determination—a man whose goal was not to be obscured by difficulties, however grave they might be.

All went well on the trip northward until the SMOKY CITY and her brood of small boats reached Elizabethtown, Illinois. This little town, which had been the scene of Captain French's first show, seemed fated to play still one more part in the French legend. For here low water forced the SMOKY CITY to stop. The NEW SENSATION tied up for her second time behind the two big flat rocks, and there she remained throughout the summer of 1879.

This was an important summer for the Frenches, and especially for Callie. For during this summer, below the limestone bluffs of Elizabethtown, she changed from a helpful wife and showboat cook and housekeeper into a performer and full-fledged partner in the showboat enterprise. Here she stretched a rope between two cottonwood trees on the bank and learned to walk the tightrope. Here she learned her songs and "pieces", and designed and made her costumes so that she could take her place in the acting company. Here, while the Captain repaired, repainted, and outfitted the boat, Callie made herself ready to be an important figure in the second cruise of the SENSATION, a cruise destined to be even more packed with adventure and misadventure than the first.

(The next article will relate the story of subsequent cruises of the original SENSATION, and of the later French boats.)

Organizational Problems in Children's Theatre

By VIRGINIA LEE COMER

Senior Consultant on Community Arts, Association of Junior Leagues of America, New York, N. Y.

EVERY theatre program planned for the children of a community has many complex problems which can be solved in terms of the individual locality, the interests and abilities of the sponsoring group and the financial resources which can be tapped. Because of the character of the problems and the factors which govern their solution, it is obvious there can be no ready-made pattern or formulae in organization. Where failures have occurred, generally, they have resulted from neglect to match personnel, production and financial resources to the community's auditorium facilities, its traffic and transportation situation, and these to the size of the child population and its economic condition.

How often one hears groups from large, sprawling industrial cities say they must work to duplicate the Palo Alto Children's Theatre, without taking into account that this unique theatre is possible because it exists in a small homogeneous community, had generous private benefaction, and is supported by a Public Recreation Department made possible by the above-average economic status and social consciousness of the citizens.

Imitation, then, is not the answer in avoiding problems on the part of a new organization. However, learning as much as possible about the practices of successful organizations, the problems they have encountered, and the failures of other groups, is an excellent way for a new group to evaluate its own situation or for a faltering one to analyze its difficulties.

The particular pattern of program organization in any given instance is actually the sum total of the solutions of various problems, which should be faced from the beginning. These solutions emerge in answer to a few general questions: Who is needed to plan and operate a program? What are the sources of productions? How and where can the largest audience be served? Where is the money coming from? How can the whole venture best be promoted.

The Sponsor

Examination of the scores of established children's theatres reveals that responsibility for planning, administration or producing rests with one or another of the following groups:

1. SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS, Junior Leagues and, to much less numerous extent, P. T. A.'s, A. A. U. W.'s, and Service Leagues, both sponsor professional programs and produce plays.
2. SCHOOLS, colleges, state normal schools, junior and senior high schools, and professional theatre schools increasingly are

This is the second in a series of seven articles on Children's Theatre. The third article, "Choosing the Children's Play", by Burdette Fitzgerald, will appear in our December issue.—Editor

producing plays for children of the community as a curricular or extra-curricular activity.

3. PUBLIC RECREATION DEPARTMENTS, in a few outstanding instances, offer formal children's theatre as well as the more prevalent informal dramatics with children.
4. COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S THEATRES, as independent agencies, may sponsor local and/or professional programs or maintain an independent producing unit similar to adult civic theatre.
5. THEATRE STUDIO SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN, in some cases, offer productions by pupils suitable for child audiences.

At a glance it will be seen that each of these groups has its own individual organizational problems and limitations. For example, rarely can a P.T.A. produce plays, yet it can function very effectively in sponsoring programs, turning its abilities to planning, promotion, etc. Its problem, then, is to find professional or local programs to present. A college or university, having a ready-made production unit, may need considerable outside help in community contacts, ticket campaigns, house management. A community children's theatre, lacking skilled theatre personnel and workshop space to maintain its own producing group, may also find insufficient professional companies to carry out its plans. It, therefore, has the problem of arousing the interest and making the arrangements with the local high school, college and Little Theatre to produce plays for the community series.

Rarely is any one group which wishes to provide children's theatre sufficient unto itself. Many organization struggles will be eliminated or minimized if the nucleus group approaches its efforts with an open attitude, ready to take into partnership with it the school systems, recreation department, private organizations and other cultural agencies.

Personnel

Whatever the limitations of the sponsoring group, one of the key problems to be solved is choice of personnel for planning, administration and production.

Planning and Administration

No children's theatre can operate successfully from every viewpoint without a carefully balanced group at the

helm. Lacking such, it is possible to have fine productions without the organization to bring in capacity audiences, or, on the other hand, with finances, production and audience expertly handled, wholly unsuitable plays may be chosen or shoddy productions presented.

Who, then, is needed to run a children's theatre successfully? First of all, there must be good organizers, meaning people who know how to work with others, delegate responsibility and keep the program developing in an orderly way. Next, promoters are needed, those people with enthusiasm for the idea, knowledge of the community and its key people in schools, libraries and youth agencies, and the ingenuity to appeal to children and adults as well. Indispensable are people with a knowledge and keen judgment of theatre and the elements of theatrical production essential to child audiences. (These are often mistakenly omitted when only professional programs are imported.) Finally, often overlooked but most vital to fundamental success, are those people who not only have the interest of children at heart but who actually and intimately know the needs, capacities and reactions of children, people capable of learning how to interpret the behaviour of children in an audience.

Generally speaking, a very high percentage of children's theatres are efficiently planned with excellent school relations, effective ticket campaigns, good advertising—all such problems surmounted. A shockingly high percentage, on the other hand, have no real standards for judging the fare they are offering. Many sponsors mistake a program's smoothly functioning mechanics for success. In other words, large audiences, capably handled, mean the goal achieved. This delusion is due to the fact that the sponsoring group lacks people capable of selecting and judging programs of theatrical merit and of interpreting the reactions of an audience from the psychological standpoint. Many times sponsors fail completely to recognize such simple and basic situations as boredom in a polite audience or over-stimulation in a responsive one.

No matter what type of program is offered, failure on some front will result where there is an imbalance of experience and viewpoints among the responsible group.

It may not be possible to have all facets represented on the active board of committee or drama department responsible for doing the actual work, in which case the problem can be solved

through a carefully selected Advisory Committee, provided this group is taken into partnership and given real responsibility. To achieve this, the advisory group should meet when the season's plans are being discussed, members should see each production (more than one performance if possible) and meet afterwards for discussion and frank evaluation.

One other personnel problem arises with surprising frequency, and that is the situation where a theatre program depends wholly upon one individual, an inspired director or a driving organizer. The tendency is to allow this individual to carry too much of the burden of responsibility. Any community is fortunate to have such an individual but the danger lies in the loss of the individual, for too often, then, the program itself collapses. This situation is dangerous, also, in that it fails to develop leadership and creativity among other members of the group. Theatrical production is a co-operative art only as effective as its weakest elements. The whole operation of a theatre program must also be a cooperative effort if it is to weather its inherent difficulties and the inevitable community storms.

The Audience

Although the goal of most children's theatres is to give the best possible theatre to the largest number of children, only in smaller towns can sponsors have the satisfaction of reaching the total elementary school-age population. The larger the community, the more staggering the problem. Every group must determine whether it is possible to bring the audience to the theatre or more advisable to take the theatre to the audience.

Factors governing this choice are:

1. suitable auditoriums, meaning those in which children can see and hear;
2. accessibility of auditoriums (the most suitable may be remote from transportation or negated by traffic hazards);
3. geographical distribution of child population;
4. children's ability to buy tickets and at what prices.

Two types of programs have developed out of these considerations:—centralized performances and trouping programs. Where one central auditorium is suitable and satisfactory, geo-

graphically and transportation-wise, the size of the audience can be increased by more performances—two on Saturday, after school and even Sunday presentations. In other cities it works more to the children's advantage to use two or three auditoriums in different sections of the city for performances of each production.

The increase in audience is tremendous when a play can be trouped to elementary schools, either free or with low admission, according to the policy of the schools. The trouping technique, though usually less costly than centralized performances, cannot be pursued without subsidy from some source.

Since trouping reaches the larger audience with fewer productions, and centralized programs offer more productions to the smaller audience, a number of cities have combined centralized and trouping activities. To illustrate, the Children's Theatre of Portland, Maine, offers during the winter centralized productions from its own producing company and usually one trouping program (often a professional puppet company). It maintains a Trailer Theatre during the summer with a heavy schedule of park performances of three productions for the Greater Portland area. The Community Children's Theatre of Kansas City, Missouri, calls on local colleges for centralized performances and also maintains two trouping production units, one from the Junior League and one from the volunteers of the Historical Museum. With local variations this combination exists in communities of such different character as Montclair, N. J., Columbus, Ohio, and Oakland, California.

In thinking of the total potential audience, trouping makes it possible to reach institutional children and segregated racial minorities, where sponsors feel a responsibility to these segments of the child population.

Many children's theatre have devoted years to experimenting with different methods of presentation before arriving at a satisfactory one. It is safe to say that the soundest organizations have started in a small way but with a general goal for expansion, reached slowly through increased performances, use of more auditoriums or by adding producing units.

Finances

Only in the occasional instances of recreational department sponsorship are public funds available to children's theatres. With centralizing performances, ticket sales are the chief source of revenue, the prices being fixed with reference to size of auditorium, local movie ticket prices, children's ability to pay. Block ticket sales to service clubs for free distribution through schools and welfare agencies is a good solution when sponsors cannot afford the lowest admission prices. Revenue from patron donations or benefit performances is unpredictable, and may decrease as these methods are pursued year after year. Program advertising is negligible in results. Drives or special money-raising events have seldom been tried but could well bear careful in-



The Rising of the Moon by Lady Augusta Gregory. This scene occurred in the production given by the Foundation School (Troupe 401) of Berea College. Directed by Earl W. Blank. Photograph by student Lufburrow.

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investigation. *Outright subsidy* or *underwriting* by a responsible private organization has proved the safest support for children's theatre, particularly with a beginning program.

Expenses of running a children's theatre are often lightened by savings from free services and reduced rates. This comes in a variety of ways as, for example, free rehearsal space from a church or club, free trucking from school board, recreation department or private firm, reduced union rates, etc. These are dependent, of course, on the endeavor having been established as one of integrity and worth, and the wider its service to children the more it receives of such help. This indicates, too, the need to have people within the organization who have wide community contacts. It is dangerous, however, for any beginning children's theatre to take such help for granted since it has been found that attitudes and customs in communities differ radically in regard to free services. Much better to secure initial solid support from some source and count free services and reduced rates as a means toward expansion.

The greatest mistakes made in the name of economy are restrictions on directors' fees and royalties. Imagination and ingenuity can overcome the difficulties of low production budgets, but nothing will transform a poor script or director.

Union rates have proved a great problem in some cities. In others, unions have been most cooperative when they have thoroughly understood the nature of the project. A continuing friendly attitude is the only way to solve this, and where it is impossible to effect an adjustment, using non-union houses is inevitable. Children's theatres cannot

survive financially playing full current union scales and at the same time serve a large audience at low admission.

Promotion and Publicity

Interest in the techniques of promotion and publicity is paramount with some groups but have been placed last in this consideration of persistent organization problems. Actually, if the aforementioned questions have been tackled intelligently and with sincerity, promotion and publicity, nine times out of ten, present no difficulty. If there is a well balanced and responsible group running the program, if there is widespread community help, if the fare offered is of high quality and every effort is being made to serve a large audience, it is not too great a task to promote an interest in the venture on the part of children and adults.

The crux of promotion rests with the schools (public, parochial and private). To centralized programs, the sale of tickets in schools is the greatest of boons, but unfortunately some groups have looked upon ticket sales as the only important factor in school relations. This very attitude has prevented some of them from receiving the coveted permission. Quite rightly, school authorities are very reluctant to allow any ticket sales within the schools, and only when a program has proved itself is such permission likely to be granted.

A group beginning without this privilege is foolhardy not to seek other forms of school aid. Interested members of the school systems should be called on to help in planning and evaluating

the program, even if the privilege of selling tickets in the schools is never granted. Aside from the intrinsic value of this help, it means also indirect promotion of interest in the program among the schools.

From the school viewpoint, sale of season tickets is preferable since it means only one campaign. If volunteers are permitted to speak in classrooms or assembly and sell in the halls, it cuts the burden on the teachers.

Where it is not possible to sell in the schools, other avenues of reaching the children must be found. These encompass fliers in classrooms, posters on bulletin boards, ticket booths conveniently located, spot announcements before and after popular children's radio programs, speeches at P. T. A. meetings, newspaper advertising and publicity, coordinated activities with libraries, junior museums and recreation agencies.

Promotion and publicity simply mean certain tools employed to bring the program to the attention of children and adults and to encourage their participation. No matter how cleverly these tools are used, they will not achieve any lasting success for the program if its basic private and public relations are not sound. These, in turn, rest upon careful analysis and solution of the organizational problems outlined and the skillful integration of the answers to form a project especially adapted to the local situation and capable of achieving the goal of excellent theatre for children.

THEATRE ON BROADWAY

By PAUL MYERS

643 Hudson St., New York 14, N. Y.

Readers of this magazine may order tickets for Broadway plays through Mr. Myers. Request should be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

IT takes more than one or two bitter disappointments to mar the optimism of the theatre-going public at the outset of the season. In the light of the brilliant prospects held out before it by the daily announcements of the producers, a quick failure here and there is not too serious — except to those directly involved.

Sundown Beach

One of the most promising of the early season's plays seemed to be Bessie Breuer's *Sundown Beach*. After tryout performances in Marblehead, Massachusetts, and Westport, Connecticut (from whence most interesting reports had reached Broadway), it was brought into the city early in September. This was the first production of the Actors' Studio—the group of young actors and actresses who had devoted a large amount of their spare time, while playing in various productions, to laboratory work and to study. Under the direction of Robert Lewis and Elia Kazan, two of the theatre's most astute directors, they had endeavored to acquire a deeper understanding of, and accomplishment in, their art. The combination of these factors should, certainly have provided stimulating theatre fare.

I am unable to report at first hand on *SUNDOWN BEACH* since it opened (and closed a very few performances later) while I was out of town. The drama critics expressed almost unanimous disapproval of Miss Breuer's play—its lack of genuineness seemed to be the chief point of attack. All too little was said about the emergence of a new theatre group. It seems to me that organizations organized along the lines of the Actors' Studio are the theatre's greatest need. Upon the debut of such a company more than mere passing reference should be paid. It is to be hoped that the speedy withdrawal of the production will not discourage the Actors' Studio from future efforts. It would certainly be tragic if the fine work begun by these people should come to a halt.

Hilarities

A few nights later, the latest of the attempts to revive vaudeville was brought into the Adelphi Theatre by Ken Robey and Stan Zucker. This was Morey Amsterdam's *Hilarities*. Mr. Amsterdam had hitherto been known to me only for his work as master of ceremonies for a radio program entitled *Gloom Dodgers*, which winds in and out of an entire morning six days a week on one of the metropolitan stations. It is one of those affairs which seemingly exist without benefit of script or schedule. People wander in and out of re-

corded commercials, or Mr. Amsterdam chats with the technicians or plays a recording. This technique, however, cannot be applied to a Broadway production — not even a vaudeville.

Those of us who lament the virtual disappearance of the two-a-day (and I am among the most lamenting), jump eagerly at every sign of a revival. The great bills of the Palace and the Hippodrome — and even the smaller houses which once dotted the country — awaken in us the most keen nostalgia. We are too apt to forget that the great bills at the Palace were the exceptional thing. In most cases, vaudeville was very like what Morey Amsterdam's *HILARITIES* are — a series of not very well done specialties. There was an acrobatic act, a team of dancers, an animal act, a comedian, a magician and a sprinkling of music. All of this is included in *HILARITIES*. Run of the mill vaudeville, however, will not effect a revival. What is needed is first-rate talent in a well integrated production. *HILARITIES* is the formula.

Heaven On Earth

Since then only two new offerings have made Broadway bows — both musicals. One was the musical comedy entitled, *Heaven On Earth*, which I reviewed in the piece for the October issue. It was my feeling after witnessing the Boston premiere that great things would still be done. Undoubtedly what the New York first-nighters saw under the title *Heaven On Earth* was vastly different than that unveiled early in September in the Massachusetts metropolis. Evidently, however, not enough was done to lift the show into a hit category. It closed in New York after its fourth performance.

Small Wonder

The second musical is a bright revue — *Small Wonder*. It is inventive, witty lightly satirical and its talent completely engaging. The music is by Baldwin Bergersen and Albert Selden, and is the revue's only shortcoming. Largely run-of-the-mill — only one tune, "When I Fall In Love," seems destined for any popularity.

The sketches have been contributed by a quartet of writers: Charles Spalding, Max Wilk, George Axelrod and Louis Laun. The lyrics are by Phyllis McGinley and Billings Brown. They are, for the most part, brilliant. A slight note of continuity is given the revue through the character played by Tom Ewell. Mr. Ewell, the winner of last year's Clarence Derwent award for his job in *JOHN LOVES MARY*, proves himself a most capable comedian. He wanders in and out of the sketches and keeps things moving along as "the normal neurotic". He discusses current literature, the lack of modern design in the human body

("look at the new cars . . . and man is still running about in much the same model which was good enough for Adam and Eve . . ."), the dissimilarities of the productions of various film studios and a host of timely problems. His foremost aide is Alice Pearce, the shapeless mime, whose following has grown to immense numbers within a very few seasons. Last season she moved also into the night-club field with considerable success. Her partner at the Blue Angel, Mark Lawrence, has created a sketch for her use in *SMALL WONDER* in which she lyricizes over the thirty-odd flavors of ice-cream available at her soda fountain. Miss Pearce as the object of a Voice of America broadcast exhibits an expressive subtlety which is a treat to watch.

SMALL WONDER has no flashy show-piece numbers. Each sketch is furnished with a minimum of scenery — just enough to suggest a locale. There are no large ballet ideas or dance routines. Badadroma, a Latin American number to end all such, is the closest it approaches a production piece. In addition to Mr. Ewell and Miss Pearce, the cast includes Mary McCarty, Chandler Cowles, Mort Marshall, Marilyn Day and Alan Ross. Kate Friedrich, Tommy Rall, Joan Mann and J. C. McCord are the principal exponents of the dance. *SMALL WONDER* is, thus far, the new season's brightest note.

Promised Shows

Though this meagre listing exhausts the early fall premieres, great things are promised for the next few weeks. Within the next month, (this is being written late in September), a host of new items will take their places upon Broadway stages. Among the non-musical items are: *A STORY FOR STRANGERS*, a new play by Marc Connelly; *TOWN HOUSE*, an adaptation by Gertrude Tonkonogy of some short stories of John Cheever's which have appeared in the *NEW YORKER*; *GRAND-MA'S DIARY* by Albert Wineman Barker and produced by the American Theatre Group; *SUMMER AND SMOKE*, a new play by the author of *THE GLASS MENAGERIE* and last season's outstanding success, *A STREET-CAR NAMED DESIRE*, by Tennessee Williams. Once again, Marge Jones, the energetic director of Dallas' Theatre '48 and the individual largely responsible for the emergence of Mr. Williams as a playwright, is directing the new play. Moss Hart is to be represented by a new comedy, *LIGHT UP THE SKY*. Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse hope to duplicate the success of *LIFE WITH FATHER* with a new adaptation from the stories of Clarence Day entitled *LIFE WITH MOTHER*. Mr. Lindsay and his wife, Dorothy Stickney, will once again appear as Clarence and Vinnie Day. Ruth Gordon is to appear in the leading role in her own, *THE LEADING LADY*, which is being readied for the stage by her husband, Garson Kanin. Norman Krasna, whose latest success was *DEAR RUTH*, has teamed his comedy talents with Groucho Marx, too long occupied in the Hollywood studios. Their play is called *TIME FOR ELIZABETH* and has Otto Kruger in the leading role.

The musical productions in the offing include *Magdalena*, an operetta from the outstanding contemporary Brazilian composer, Heitor Villa-Lobos. Frederick Hazlitt Brennan and Homer Curran have written the book. Cheryl Crawford, whose production of *Brigadoon* only recently ceased delighting local audiences, is producing *Love Life*. The new musical boasts a book by Alan Jay Lerner and a score by Kurt Weill. Nanette Fabray, recently seen in *High Button Shoes* and Ray Middleton, last found in *Annie Get Your Gun* (both of



Scene from the show, *Small Wonder*, with the setting designed by Ralph Alswang. The players give action to the "The Commuters' Song".

which are still available to local theatre-goers) are playing the leads in *Love Life*. Additional promise is given this production through the presence of Elia Kazan as its director and Michael Kidd as choreographer.

From Last Season

The lack of new activity allows a chance to review some of last season's arrivals which are still seeking audiences and are worth attention. Most outstanding is the aforementioned drama of Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The winner of both the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award, the cast is virtually the same as that which opened in the play last December. Enough has been written and said about Mr. Williams play to serve. This is only a reminder to those who have not seen it yet for the second time and to those increasingly rare individuals who have not seen it all.

Last season's only other serious play still eyeing the Broadway trade is Jean-Paul Sartre's *THE RESPECTFUL PROSTITUTE*. This is the French philosopher-playwright's study of the American South and is gripping, penetrating drama. Meg Mundy, who created the title role, has been succeeded by Ann Dvorak of Hollywood. When New Stages first presented the Sartre play it was preceded by Lennox Robinson's *CHURCH STAGE*. Soon after the opening Thornton Wilder's *THE HAPPY JOURNEY* was substituted as the curtain raiser. Currently, Richard Harriy's *HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS* is filling the bill. This is the play which was first presented as one of three short plays by the Experimental Theatre. Later, under the auspices of Eddie Dowling, it was presented for a short run along with two other playlets of Mr. Harriy's. It is a most interesting picture of an episode in the lives of a group of hobos residing in New York's Central Park.

Born Yesterday and *Harvey*, both hold-overs from earlier seasons, are still favorites among the theatre-goers. In the last-named, Joe E. Brown is cur-

rently playing Elwood P. Dowd. Originally played by Frank Fay, the roster of actors appearing in the role hereabouts includes James Stewart, James Dunn and the play's producer, Brock Pemberton. *Born Yesterday* is Garson Kanin's topical comedy in which Judy Holliday is still playing Billie Dawn — the character to whom the play's title applies. John Alexander has recently assumed the role created by Paul Douglas. Before very long, a duplication of the production is taking to the road with a cast headed by Jean Parker and Lon Chaney, Jr.

Henry Fonda, Robert Keith, David Wayne and William Harrigan continue to enliven *MISTER ROBERTS*. This is another of last season's offerings which continues to draw standee audiences at almost every performance. Thomas Heggens' and Joshue Logan's adaptation of the former's story contains all the ingredients essential to theatre success and in the very correct proportions.

Among the musicals, in addition to the brace aforementioned, there are *Inside U.S.A.*, the Beatrice Lillie and Jack Haley revue inspired by John Gunther's national study; *Make Mine Manhattan*, Hassard Short's engaging satirical revue of metropolitan life and *Finian's Rainbow*, which is as sparkling and fresh and tuneful as ever. *Howdy, Mr. Ice* is the most recent edition of the perennially attractive show on skates.

This backlog of successful offerings assure the play-goer of plentiful fare. During the lean days of spring and early fall, it is always a pleasure to return to one of the already established items. Cast changes assure new interest for the discerning play-goer. A comparison of the style of two performers in the same role is most interesting. It is the kind of opportunity we rarely get under the prevailing system of the American theatre.

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Mention Dramatics

THE PLAY OF THE MONTH

Edited by EARL W. BLANK

Director of Dramatics, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky

This department is designed to assist directors, teachers, and students choose, cast and produce plays of recognized merit. Suggestions concerning plays which readers should like to see discussed here will be welcomed by the Department Editor.

STAGING A SCRAP OF PAPER

(As produced by The Berea Players of Berea College)

By THEDA TAYLOR

Student Technical Director, Berea College Players, Berea, Ky.

A SCRAP OF PAPER, a comic drama in three acts, adapted by J. Polgrave Simpson, Esq., from Victorien Sardou's LES PATTES DE MOUCHE. Six women and six men, costumes of 1860 French period. No royalty. Samuel French, 25 West 45th St. New York.

Suitability

This play can be done successfully where there is a large number of students from which to select. The cast of twelve and the necessity for a large backstage crew to execute three sets provide opportunity for utilizing the talent of a large group of interested people. It is well suited to any age group of players, and it contains sheer entertaining nonsense for all audiences.

Plot

As suggested by the title, the entire action evolves about a pink scrap of paper. In his youth, Prosper Couramont had a gay flirtation with Louise de Merival, and they communicated with each other by putting love notes in a statuette. As the play opens, Prosper has just returned from three years of traveling all over the world, and he finds that Louise has become Madame de la Glaciere in his absence, the wife of a jealous man. It happens that Louise has left the room untouched since her last meeting there with Prosper, and their last love letter, which Prosper had failed to get, is still there. After ridiculous hiding of notes, ensnaring of affections, and general confusion of the whole situation, all turns out well when Louise and her husband return to their conventionally proper married life and Prosper is skillfully captured by Mademoiselle Suzanne, Louise's clever and enticing cousin. A sub-scrap of paper enters into the scene and is volleyed around in confusion with the main scrap. Louise's sister, Mathilde, and Anatole, are in love and are determined to marry de-

spite the strenuous objections of Anatole's guardian, Zenobie. Finally, this happy match is also made and the play ends on a note of "living happily ever after."

Casting

Prosper and Suzanne hold the lime-light most of the time, but as for strong leads, there are none. The only bit parts are those of the servants, and the other nine characters all play important parts in the development of the plot. It is necessary that Prosper, Suzanne, and Louise be handsome looking people on the stage to lend credibility to the idea that they are worth going through all these exasperating experiences. Anatole and Mathilde should be characters who look young enough to be still under the command of their guardians.

Directing

The main thing to remember when one directs this play is that it is high comedy, and in this particular high comedy the style must remain artificial from the beginning to the end. The artificiality of this type of comedy is found in such literary devices as asides and such dramatic devices as playing front and using free, wide business without resorting to burlesque or farce. If the actors are kept artificial, the audience will be able to laugh at them and not identify themselves with the actor's position. In a comedy of situation such as this is, it is necessary to have this type of audience reaction.

Two problems that may become acute if not carefully watched are speech and tempo. The play should be done in stage speech, and unless the students have had extensive training, the director must watch each word carefully and coach his actors in this speech. The following book is suggested as a reference book for stage speech problems: Gray & Wise, *The Bases of Speech*, Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York. 1934.

The tempo must be maintained at a peak during the entire action of the play. There is no room for languid speech or action; it must be crisp and lively throughout. It is easy, however, to get the tempo at such a rate that speeches are lost, and a director should keep this in mind.

Acts I and III seem to fall into place without too much trouble to the director. In Act I the characters are being introduced and the action is swift. Act III is the final solving of the situation and also provides motivation for interesting action. Act II, however, requires more careful attention to the direction. It contains several long speeches in the nature of soliloquies which endanger the tempo and run the risk of losing the interest of the audience.

Rehearsals

This play was in rehearsal for seven weeks. Readings of the play were held during the first rehearsal period. The first six weeks of rehearsal the cast met for one hour on Wednesday, three hours on Friday, and eight hours on Saturday. The last week of rehearsal the cast and crew met for full dress rehearsal on Monday and Thursday nights. There were four full dress rehearsals before public production.

Stage Problems

The first large problem this play presents to a technician working with limited facilities is

Act III from A Scrap of Paper as staged by the Players of Berea College. Directed by Earl W. Blank.



the necessity for having three different sets. The most practical method we found, in the interest of expediency in shifting, was to use a unit set. We had two units; one made of a 5' door flat, a 3' flat, and a 5' flat; the other made of a 3' flat and a 5' flat. These units were made by connecting the flats with double action hinges so that the units could be used in any geometrical form. In planning the sets we tried to take some predominant unit that was different for each act and, using the flat units, build a set around it. For Act I the predominant unit was a set of two French doors, for Act II it was a large double door, and for Act III a large paned window the full width of the back of the set. In order to fill in occasional spaces between the flats, and also to introduce variety into the sets, we used plugs in Acts I and II settings. These small flats could be painted with some distinct design since they had to be used in only one set. In Act I and III we used the backdrop, which was painted with the design of a garden-park. Act II required no backdrop, so we dropped a cyclorama and set up Act II as a profile setting against the background of the drapes.

In keeping with the French taste of about 1860 we used mostly white and cream furniture profusely ornamented with designs done in gilt. If period furniture of any type is accessible it is possible to fit it into the setting without too much difficulty. The flats were painted a mustard tan.

The shifting of scenery required twelve people and a carefully planned method with specific jobs for each person. The floor plans had to be carefully marked on the floor so that the flats could be placed quickly and accurately. The furniture had to be marked in for each act also, in order to avoid confusion. Anyone working on this show in a theatre with a large backstage area would probably find it more successful to build the sets on wagons and wheel them onto the stage each act.

Lighting

The lighting of this play did not present any major problems except the necessity of moving the lights for each act, a difficulty easily met by having long extensions on all the floods and striplights. The main consideration was getting as much light as possible on the stage. We used four 500 Watt spots on the beam in order to light the apron well. This was necessary because of the style of high comedy of playing across the footlights. Nine 250 Watt spots were used on the light bridge, two 250 Watt floods and two striplights on the backdrop. Amber and flesh pink gelatin were used on all the lights to create a light, gay atmosphere.

Costuming

The main difficulty met in costuming was the necessity of creating costumes related to the period of the play with a limited wardrobe from which to draw. It is imperative that a good book on costume periods in history be consulted for reference in these altering and re-making projects. Our main source of reference was: Barton, Lucy, *Historic Costumes for the Stage*. Walter H. Baker Co., Boston, 1935.

Make-up

Make-up did not present any problems. There were several character

make-ups to do, but none of them was especially difficult. It is suggested that for a cast this large each member be instructed so that he will be able to at least apply his own base. This reduces the time required for the job.

Budget

The play was presented by the Berea Players on the following complete budget:

Playbooks	\$ 6.50
Stagecraft	14.33
Publicity	23.58
Lighting56
Properties05
Costumes (Cleaning & Laundry)	8.60
Make-up	8.10
Tax	27.81
Tau Delta Tau	9.27
Total	\$98.80

Publicity

The very title of the play lends itself readily to clever publicity stunts. On the waste paper containers on campus we had written: Reminder—*A Scrap of Paper*. We had the paper napkins in the boarding halls stamped with the name of the play, and in our Sunday evening sack lunches we received a scrap of paper printed to remind us of the coming production. Posters were placed in the main buildings on the campus and in the business firms nearby. There was hardly a student on the campus who was not aware of the approaching major show.

The love letter theme was carried over into the planning of the ushers. The ushers were dressed in short pink skirts and had on little pill-box hats. They had shoulder bags in which they carried the programs. Each program was printed on a pink sheet of paper of letter size and placed in a pink envelope scented with perfume . . . so each audience member received his own personal love letter.

To heighten the luxurious effect and to make the time required for scene changes seem shorter we played music between acts of a light nature that set the mood for the play.

Results

The production of *A Scrap of Paper* was definitely an educational project. First, it offered many students the chance to work. It afforded training in the use of stage speech, which is excellent for ear training, for the members of the cast, and for the audience it gave a sample of one stage in the development of drama. In addition to providing this all-round bit of education, it provided two hours of distinct entertainment and enjoyment for the audience.

(December Issue: *THE GLASS MENAGERIE*)

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The Radio Program of the Month

By S. I. SCHARER, Radio Department

New York University, Washington Square, N. Y.

The purpose of this department is to direct attention to the outstanding radio programs on the air during the 1948-49 school year. Comments and suggestion from readers are welcomed by the Department Editor.

HARVEST OF STARS

(Wednesday 9:30-10:00 EST Columbia Broadcasting System)

TOP talent alone does not insure good entertainment. Top talent skillfully directed and blended does provide the kind of entertainment discriminating people seek. The airways show no signs of being less cluttered with inferior programs than a year or two or five years ago.

One of the reasons for this deplorable state of affairs is the belief of some networks and sponsors that all that is needed to interest thousands of listeners is a collection of "big" names. And the more the merrier. People responsible for what goes on the air too often employ excellent talent wastefully. They spare no pains or money in signing up "big" names and there the effort seems to end. Almost any kind of a script, or supporting cast, or selection of numbers will do.

"Harvest of Stars," producers have avoided the errors mentioned above. The "names" on this ear-catching program are James Melton, Lillian Murphy, and Dr. Frank Black. Glan Heisch is the producer-director. The orchestra and chorus complement the stellar performances of James Melton and Lillian Murphy in an artful selection of musical

numbers. A typical program is as follows:

"Rio Rita"	Tierney
"Italian Street Song"	Herbert
"Why"	Coots
"Berceuse"	Godard
"Some Day"	Herbert
"Malaguena"	Moskowski
"Ah Sweet Mystery of Life"	Herbert

Generally, each week's program features another composer, as Herbert was featured in the program listed. James Melton and Lillian Murphy gain their glory in duets as well as solos and Dr. Black and his orchestra hold the center of the stage with an orchestral number or two.

For many opera stars, radio is an extra-curricular activity. But Metropolitan Opera tenor James Melton reversed the usual procedure. He achieved national popularity at the microphone before succeeding in the opera.

The handsome, six-foot-two Melton, who headlines the "Harvest of Stars", had full-fledged careers as a popular singer and as motion picture star, but both times he put them aside to pursue his real goal.

"More than anything in the world I wanted to be a first-rate singer of opera,

of concert and of radio," he says, "and I was willing to make any sacrifice to get there."

Sacrifice he did, but he credits his charming and beautiful wife, Marjorie, for spurring him on toward giving up lucrative fields twice to return to student days.

James Melton was born in Moultrie, Georgia, January 2, 1904. His father was in the lumber business and later the family resided in Citra and Ocala, Florida. He began studying for a legal career at the University of Florida but on the advice of the University president, he switched to Vanderbilt University to study music.

After he was graduated from Vanderbilt where he studied singing under Gaetano de Luca (to make ends meet he used to play saxophone and clarinet in a Nashville band) Melton headed for New York. He remembers that his net capital was \$160.

It was the great showman S. A. (Roxy) Rothafel who gave Melton his first opportunity. The introduction to Roxy was unusual. When regular approaches for an interview failed, Melton threatened to sing outside the showman's office. He was admitted finally and made the grade. He became a member of the Roxy Gang.

"Roxy asked me how much I needed to support myself, study and help out with the family finances," Melton recalls. "We settled on \$250 a week. Then he said, 'but you tell me if you need more and sing two out of three weeks. You're young and your voice is young. You must rest it every third week.'"

Roxy also gets the credit for steering Melton into radio. He first sang with the Revelers Quartet, the Sieberling Singers and on many other radio programs from 1928 to 1934. It was during those years that he met his wife — at a concert. They were married in 1929.

1934 was a key year in Melton's career because of a concert tour he went on with George Gershwin. They gave 28 concerts in 28 different towns in as many days. Melton had to sing all different kinds of songs — classical, folk, cowboy and popular.

"From that tour came my decision to become a concert singer," he says. "We had the most responsive audiences in the world. After each performance the people would crowd around us. George would settle himself again on the piano stool, I'd sit or stand next to him and we'd give them Gershwin music for an hour or so. We'd have to fight to get away."

Melton spent the next year with voice teachers and built up a concert repertory (he has accumulated some 3,000 classical and semi-classical songs in addition to countless popular numbers).

"The concerts in small towns often netted no more than \$50, of which \$40 went to an accompanist, but until we went broke it was worth it," Melton recalls with a smile.



(Left to right) James Melton, Glan Heisch, Frank Black, and Don Hancock, principal figures in CBS's program "Harvest of Stars". (Photograph courtesy of CBS.)

RECENT RELEASES

By ALBERT JOHNSON

Prominent playwright and former Director of the Cornell College Theater

PEOPLE ARE TALKING
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3-ACT PLAYS
BOYS ABOUT BOBBETTE
GLORY TO GOLDBY

MAYBE IT'S LOVE
SO HELP ME

HIT PLAYS

By DONALD PAYTON

For the convenience of the *Hundreds* of Play Directors who, after producing a Payton play, are continually demanding *more and more* productions by this outstanding writer of teen-age plays — we are listing below all of his plays published to date.

3-ACT PLAYS

JUST DUCKY THE AWKWARD PAUSE
BOARDING HOUSE REACH DESPERATE AMBROSE
MOTHER DOES THE TALKING

1-ACT PLAYS

BOBBY SOX
LIFE O' THE PARTY
DATE FOR BOBBY SOX
STONEY JONES

LOVE HITS WILBUR
LIFE WITH BOBBY SOX
FOXY GRANDMA
THANKS, BOBBY SOX

UNCLE TOM'S CRABBIN'
THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE
WILBUR MINDS THE BABY
SURE AS YOUR BORN

1-ACT XMAS PLAYS

ALL IS CALM

MUGGSY'S MERRY CHRISTMAS

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Then in 1935 the Melton finances were replenished when Hollywood beckoned with a picture contract. He appeared in such films as *STARS OVER BROADWAY*, *SING ME A LOVE SONG* and *MELODY FOR TWO*. Two years later he quit radio, movies and \$100,000 a year to settle down to study for the opera.

He "retired" to a country home near Westport, Conn. with a pianist and a coach and a year later he was ready for his debut in grand opera. His first role was "Pinkerton" in *Madame Butterfly*. He became the leading tenor for the Chicago Opera Company on November 5, 1938, then sang with the St. Louis, Rochester, Philadelphia, La Scala, Havana, Cuba and other opera companies.

He made his debut at the Metropolitan Opera House on December 7, 1942, in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

He now has a repertoire of ten top tenor roles of which "Cavaradossi" in *Tosca* is the latest. The others are in *Don Giovanni*, *Traviata*, *Lucia*, *Manon*, *Mignon*, *Martha*, *Lohengrin* and *Madame Butterfly*.

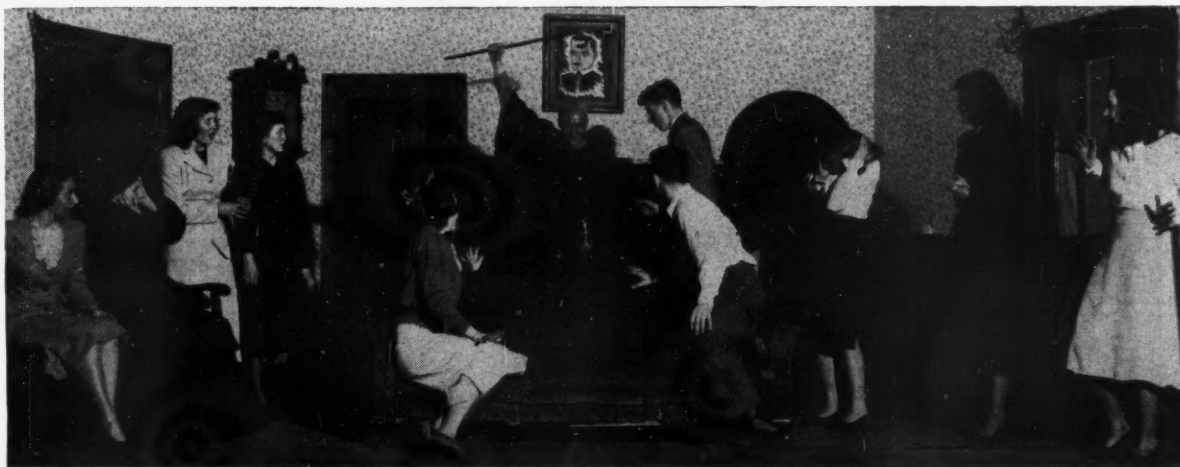
Home to the Meltons is still the cottage in Westport, Conn. When fame and fortune and necessity dictated, they built onto the dwelling, until now it is an Early American mansion, with a separate small house for Mrs. Marjorie Barkley McClure, the novelist, and mother of Mrs. Melton; a nursery wing for baby Margo; and a huge music room where the tenor can

rehearse a new operatic role with an entire cast.

Melton's chief hobby—collecting old automobiles—is well known. He has some ancient automobiles and his collection is world famous. His most recent addition was the International Harvester Auto Wagon, presented by his sponsor when he signed his five-year contract for "Harvest of Stars." The program made its CBS debut April 7, 1948.

Melton is able to sing classics in every strata of music, which is what he likes to do. "My kind of music is any kind that is good and in good taste," says Melton. No wonder what "Harvester of Stars" is such a successful program.

Scene from the play, *Out of this World*, as staged by members of Troupe 541 of the St. Mary High School, Jackson, Mich. Directed by Sister Eugene, S.C.



THE FILM OF THE MONTH

By H. KENN CARMICHAEL

Department of Drama, Los Angeles City College,
Los Angeles, California.

This department is designed to direct attention to the outstanding motion pictures of the 1948-49 season. Suggestions for future discussions are welcomed by the Department Editor.

SEALED VERDICT

NOW and then Hollywood produces a good film that gains in importance because of its background. Such a film is Paramount's *Sealed Verdict*, the first motion picture made against a background of the German war crimes trials. *Sealed Verdict* is a gripping dramatic story based on the novel of the same title written by Lionel Shapiro, a young Canadian newspaperman and formerly a topflight war reporter.

Starring Academy-Award-winner Ray Milland and flame-haired Florence Marly, a European actress who makes her English-speaking debut in the picture, the screenplay tackles a provocative subject. Paramount's treatment, while not documentary, is a serious survey that does not sacrifice the romance and melodrama which film audiences have come to expect.

The locale of the book and film is the small Bavarian city of Reschweiler, a heap of rubble on the banks of the Auer River. Inside the courthouse, one of the few undamaged buildings that remain, seven defiant Nazis are being prosecuted. General Otto Steigmann, the most prominent of the defendants, has been accused of committing atrocities against thousands of defenseless persons. The General justifies his acts by claiming that, as an officer, he merely carried out orders "from above." Appearing in his behalf is Themis Delisle, a

glamorous Parisian model played by Miss Marly, whose motives for trying to save him are shrouded in mystery. Prosecuting the arrogant Nazi and his compatriots is Major Robert Lawson (Milland), an American lawyer, capable, human, and, which is more important, humane.

It is only after the attorney has successfully concluded a brilliant case against Steigmann and the others, that he finds himself beginning to doubt the very basis upon which all of his testimony against the Nazi general has been founded. He is faced with the dilemma of a man trained in Anglo-Saxon law, who knows that an individual must not be convicted no matter how deserving of death he may be, except upon reliable and proven testimony. Otherwise, the whole concept of justice, as Western civilization has known it, would collapse.

This premise helps to make *SEALED VERDICT* not only an engrossing story, but also a significant motion picture. The usual romantic thread is carried by Ray Milland and Miss Marly, but the approach is fresh, and subordinate to the central action and theme. Suspicions attached to the French girl's actions are ultimately swept away, and it is largely through her that the young attorney proves conclusively that the conviction of Steigmann is justified. Many complications of plot attend the pursuit of the truth, most of them made convincing, rather than merely melodramatic, by the straightforwardness of the dialogue and the general excellence of the acting.

Months of advance preparation went into the making of the picture. In order to add authenticity to the production, producer Robert Fellows dispatched a 55-man crew, headed by director Lewis Allen and including both Milland and Miss Marly, to Strasbourg, along the French-German border, where over 40,000 feet of film was shot. In this town that had been found to resemble closely the Reschweiler described in the book, cameramen photographed and artists sketched various buildings to match them against locales described in Shapiro's novel.

Back on the Paramount lot, fourteen sets were reproduced, each constructed to tie with one of the actual European locations selected by Allen. The Strasbourg police headquarters, for example, appears in the picture as the headquarters for the war crime trials, while Kaiser Wilhelm's huge castle, located at Haut Koenigsburg, 35 miles from the city, is utilized as a site for the execution of the German war criminals.

After the completion of the advance background shooting, Miss Marly embarked on a concentrated study of English. That the Sorbonne-educated actress would learn the new tongue in record time was pretty much of a foregone conclusion; she had already played in Europe and South America in French, Spanish and Czech. With her initial English-speaking role in *SEALED VERDICT*, she becomes probably the only film actress to have starred in four languages.

It was Ray Milland himself who happened across a photograph of the talented performer; he lost no time in getting director Allen to arrange for a screen test in London. One week later she was working before the cameras in Strasbourg. Miss Marly portrayed the leading feminine role in the French-made *Les Maudits* which won last year's Cannes Festival Award, and before her assignments to *Sealed Verdict* had just completed the Czech language film, *Krakatit*, produced in Prague.

Casting the picture presented the studio with no small task; a total of 96 players speak a line or more in the film, and 32 of them are principals. The role of Captain Kinsella, a blustering Texan, is portrayed by Broderick Crawford, who last worked at Paramount nine years ago in *Beau Geste*. He is perhaps best known for his characterization of Lenny, the witless giant in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, which received high praise in New York. General Steigmann is played by John Hoyt, prominent stage and screen actor, who created a similar screen role in *O.S.S.* two years ago. John Ridgely, whose film work had brought him to almost every studio except Paramount, makes his initial appearance for the company as Captain Lance Nissen, attorney Lawson's friend.



Florence Marly and Ray Milland in a scene from the new Paramount picture, *Sealed Verdict*.

Ludwig Donath, the character actor who scored as Al Jolson's father in *The Jolson Story*, has an important role in the film. Paul Lees, ex-Marine hero, is afforded his first real screen opportunity as Private Clay Hockland, a GI stationed in the American zone. Marcel Journet, son of the internationally known opera star and a member of one of France's most distinguished theatrical families, has a top supporting role, as has Norbert Schiller, named by Thomas Mann as Europe's leading pre-war actor. Celia Lovsky, who returns to the screen after several years away from it, is seen as the mother of the condemned Nazi general.

The SEALED VERDICT cast is one of the cosmopolitan casts that have occasionally been assembled for American motion pictures. Indicative of the number of foreign-born players who have migrated to Hollywood in recent years is the fact that twelve members of the troupe came to the United States from other countries. Three Britishers, three Austrians, two Czechs, two Germans, one Dane and one Frenchman were given prominent assignments. Ray Milland and Florence Marly are British and Czech-born, respectively. Ludwig Donath, Norbert Schiller and John Wengraf are Viennese. Frank Conroy and Leslie Denison hail from Great Britain. Anna Hope and Fay Wall were German screen favorites in pre-Hitler days. Marcel Journet is French, Celia Lovsky was born in Czechoslovakia, and Torben Meyer in Denmark.

The studio secured the services of Gordon Dean, former Personal Assistant to Supreme Court Associate Justice Robert Jackson at the Nuremberg war crimes trials, to serve as technical advisor for *Sealed Verdict*. The prominent authority on criminal law, who was active during the prosecution of Goering, Hess, and Keitel, was especially concerned with the authentic filming of the courtroom and execution scenes. The courtroom used in the film is a studio-constructed composite of tribunals in such cities as Nuremberg, Dachau, Wiesbaden and Salzburg. Photographs of the actual trials and certain newsreel sequences were studied to secure maximum realism.

There were troubles connected with choosing six players for the dubious honor of being the first actors to portray Nazi war criminals on the American screen. Photographs of Germans in this unsavory category were made into composite pictures which were used as a basis for the selection of suitable types. Numerous performers are reported to have expressed something less than avid interest in appearing as arch-criminals against humanity.

Ray Milland was thoroughly at home working with Lewis Allen; since the latter started directing for the studio five years ago, Milland has worked under him in several films, including *THE UNINVITED*, *THE IMPERFECT LADY*, and *SO EVIL MY LOVE*.

Eighteen-year-old Patricia Miller, university student, won the supporting role of a homeless and undernourished waif largely because she looked the part: she tips the scales at 79 pounds.

Best Thespian Honor Roll

For Meritorious Participation in Dramatic Arts During the 1947-48 Season

- Jack Tripeny, Pat Winbourne, Troupe 1, Natrona Co. High School, Casper, Wyo.
- Martha Tano, Troupe 2, Senior High School, Fairmont, W. Va.
- David Wright, Avis Pinney, Troupe 6, Township High School, Mentor, Ohio.
- David Booth, Peter Mount, Troupe 15, Roger Ludlowe High School, Fairfield, Conn.
- Charles Hudgins, Anne Davis, Troupe 16, Township High School, Harrisburg, Ill.
- Mary Ann Quinn, Norma Rennau, Troupe 17, Aurora, Nebr., High School.
- Violet We'ch, Troupe 18, York High School, Clyde, Ohio.
- Peggy Hadley, Delbert Henkley, Troupe 21, Ben Davis High School, Indianapolis, Ind.
- James Runyon, Troupe 23, Williamson, W. Va., High School.
- Mary Ottesen, Cleve Child, Troupe 25, Spanish Fork, Utah, High School.
- Kathleen Long, Troupe 27, Morgantown, W. Va., High School.
- Eleanor Renick, Troupe 30, Clendenin, W. Va., High School.
- Donna Measday, Troupe 33, Ft. Stockton, Tex., High School.
- Jack Cliburn, Troupe 34, Fairview, W. Va., High School.
- Mary Nell Houghton, Troupe 35, Mainland High School, Daytona Beach, Fla.
- Harold Higgason, Effie Hyatt, Troupe 36, Hope, Ark., High School.
- Gerald Hopkins, Louise Ford, Troupe 38, Wabash, Ind., High School.
- Jerry Crockett, Paul Harris, Troupe 39, Preston, Idaho, High School.
- Carolyn Cawley, C. B. Green, Troupe 42, El Dorado, Ark., High School.
- Paul Hicks, Martha Jane McGuffie, Troupe 43, Cameron, W. Va., High School.
- Clair Mai Leslie, Troupe 45, Kilgore, Tex., High School.
- Ramona McGeorge, Robert Logan, Troupe 47, Newton, Kans., Sr. High School.
- Donald Brown, Troupe 50, Roosevelt High School, Wyandotte, Mich.
- Leon Hoffa, Troupe 51, Grundy Center, Iowa High School.
- Bill Shane, Iris Fisher, Troupe 52, Emmett, Idaho, High School.
- Eddie Shumway, Betty Whitehouse, Troupe 57, Columbus, Indiana, High School.
- Joe Bergheim, Jane Valentine, Troupe 60, Boulder, Colo., High School.
- Janet Larsen, Troupe 61, So. Whitley, Indiana, High School.
- Shirley Alverson, Troupe 62, Oakwood Township High School, Fithian, Ill.
- Dorothy Markest, Troupe 65, Rocky River, Ohio, High School.
- Robert Mann, Stanley Gertzmen, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, Ohio.
- Betty Collentine, Edward Richeson, Troupe 69, Dubuque, Ia., Sr. High School.
- Melva Thomason, John Iocile, Joan Stevens, Barbara Baker, Troupe 70, Laramie, Wyo., High School.
- Mary Elizabeth Keeney, Troupe 72, Alderson, W. Va., High School.
- Betty Lou Hayden, Mary Ann Pfeiffer, Troupe 74, Middletown High School, New York.
- Beth Lillard, Troupe 76, Lewiston, Idaho, High School.
- Carita Wayne, Troupe 81, Alamogordo, New Mex., High School.
- Joyce Toomey, Troupe 82, Etowah, Tenn., High School.
- Marjorie Dorton, John McLaugherty, Troupe 84, Princeton, W. Va., High School.
- Hazel Riley, Troupe 86, York Institute, Jamestown, Tenn.
- Alice Ann Roush, Troupe 88, Point Pleasant, W. Va., High School.
- Robert Mowery, Troupe 89, Struthers, Ohio, High School.
- Patricia Davis, Troupe 91, Michigan City, Ind., High School.
- Afton Ash, Norman Clyde, Troupe 92, Springville, Utah, High School.
- Michael Nolan, Troupe 93, Stillwater, Minn., Senior High School.
- Barbara Tozier, Troupe 94, York Community High School, Elmhurst, Ill.
- Ruth Jeanne D'ehl, Troupe 95, Gettysburg, Pa., High School.
- Martha Barouth, Sally DuPree, Troupe 98, Fayetteville, New York, High School.
- Bettye Kafer, Ben Homel, Troupe 99, Weston, W. Va., High School.
- Elton Slonecker, Troupe 100, Bellefontaine, Ohio, High School.
- Hulen Cook, Evelyn Lee, Troupe 106, Champaign, Ill., Sr. High School.
- Stanley Sneider, Berna Deinhardt, Troupe 109, Liberty, N. Y., High School.
- Edwin Camp, Troupe 107, Newport, Vt., High School.
- Robert McKone, Marjorie Howard, Troupe 110, New Hampton, Ia., High School.
- Paul Meiners, Troupe 111, Burley, Idaho, High School.
- Ruth Caldwell, Troupe 113, Omak, Wash., Sr. High School.
- Lois Livingston, Troupe 114, A. B. Davis High School, Mt. Vernon, New York.
- Ruth C. Schenk, Troupe 116, Mt. Vernon, Ind., High School.
- David Harris, Troupe 120, South Side High School, Rockville Centre, New York.
- Ronald Rowley, Jo Ann Gott, Troupe 121, Stonewall Jackson High School, Charleston, W. Va.
- Betty Bowen, Raymond Barbour, Troupe 122, Newport News, Va., High School.
- Darlene Schlavin, Troupe 124, Jefferson High School, Portland 11, Ore.
- Ann'e Mae Morris, Troupe 125, Wetumpka, Ala., High School.
- Vivienne Jennings, Carlee Chester, Troupe 126, Alton, Ill., Sr. High School.
- Florence Poffas, Richard Waddington, Troupe 127, Salem, New Jersey, High School.
- Mary Carlton, Janis Phillips, Troupe 129, Grapeland, Tex., High School.
- Cadet Capt. Charles Pond, Jackie Giro, Troupe 130, Army Navy Academy, Carlsbad, Calif.
- Betty Jean Staley, Marie Schlemmer, Troupe 131, Bloomington, Ill., High School.
- Mary Jo Crew, Troupe 133, Shenandoah, Ia., High School.
- Gloria Dublin, Troupe 138, Martin High School, Laredo, Tex.
- Mickey Armstrong, Troupe 141, Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., High School.
- Mary Lou Brent, Carol Berry, Troupe 145, Fassifern High School, Hendersonville, N. Car.
- Chuck Young, Troupe 148, San Bernardino, Calif., High School.
- Robert Abney, Jo Ann Wilbourn, Patsy Martin, Troupe 149, Paragould, Ark., High School.
- Ruth Ferguson, Richard Thomas, Troupe 154, Holmes High School, Covington, Ky.
- Marilyn Barr, Dick Hunter, Troupe 157, Liberty Memorial High School, Laurence, Kans.
- William Kuster, Jeanne Ruckle, Troupe 158, Bloomsburg, Penna., High School.
- Richard Miller, Betty Sorenson, Troupe 159, Central High School, Harlan, Ia.
- Evelyn Gray, Troupe 160, Gadsden Co. High School, Quincy, Fla.
- Joanne Graham, Troupe 163, Harbor High School, Ashtabula, Ohio.
- Mickey Casey, Troupe 167, Whittier, Calif., High School.
- Honey Browning, Troupe 168, Logan, W. Va., High School.
- Gene Headley, Polly Davis, Troupe 171, Grafton, W. Va., Sr. High School.

Richard La Salle, Troupe 173, Bellevue, Ohio, High School.
 Shirley Hurlbert, Troupe 177, Orlando, Fla., Sr. High School.
 Miriam Stoner, Dick Siegfried, Troupe 178, Washington High School, Massillon, Ohio.
 Martha Ann O'Neill, Troupe 180, Tuscola, Ill., Community High School.
 Roberta Jones, Alan Campbell, Troupe 182, Ocala, Fla., High School.
 Monte Frierson, Margaret De Puert, Troupe 183, Bristow, Okla., High School.
 Dorothy McLeskey, Troupe 186, Messick High School, Memphis, Tenn.
 Sylvia Silver, Robert De Laney, Troupe 187, Brownsville, Pa., Senior High School.
 Bill Loving, Troupe 188, Elizabeth Zimmermann High School, New Berlin, Ill.
 Bob Garner, Troupe 189, Magnolia High School, Matewan, W. Va.
 Ronald Vickrey, Morva Casey, Troupe 190, Coeur d'Alene, Ida High School.
 Charlotte Huff, Troupe 192, Keokuk, Ia., Senior High School.
 Gredna Doty, Troupe 194, Oelwein, Ia., Senior High School.
 Patricia Stewart, Wally Murray, Troupe 195, Ft. Benton, Mont., High School.
 Curtis Clay, Troupe 197, Mullen, W. Va., High School.
 Carolyn Junker, Troupe 202, Concord, N. C., High School.
 Malcolm Forsyth, Ethma Ewing, Troupe 205, Bolton High School, Alexandria, La.
 Shirley Johnson, Robert Carney, Troupe 207, Mt. Vernon, Wash., Union High School.
 Joanne Knopp, Troupe 208, Presentation Academy, Louisville, Ky.
 Cherri Gholson, Troupe 209, Knoxville, Iowa High School.
 James Claussen, Allan Snyder, Troupe 210, Topeka, Kansas, High School.
 Michael Duerr, Troupe 214, Carlisle, Penna., High School.
 Florence Christian, Troupe 217, Cristobal, Canal, Zone, High School.
 Pauline Stafford, Troupe 218, Mannington, W. Va., High School.
 Alva Harrison, Barbara Yonker, Troupe 219, Pana, Ill., Township High School.
 Anne Dilley, Betty Walker, Troupe 220, Union High School, Willoughby, Ohio.
 Ray McGinnis, Phyllis Harrison, Troupe 223, Bradley-Bourbonnais, High School, Bradley, Illinois.
 Billy Peltit, Troupe 224, Louisa Co. High School, Mineral, Va.
 Patty Cochenour, Troupe 226, Washington, Irving High School, Clarksburg, W. Va.
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 Miriam Smith, Troupe 235, High School, Ellen-ville, N. Y.
 Shirley Lewis, Troupe 236, Cairo, Ill., High School.
 Helen Knowlton, Troupe 238, Oil City, Penna., High School.
 William Cox, Troupe 239, Cedar City, Utah, High School.
 Aletha McCasland, Troupe 240, Lubbock, Tex., Sr. High School.
 Patty Colby, Troupe 241, Plattsmouth, Nebr., High School.
 Gordon Johansen, Troupe 242, Edgemont, S. Dak., High School.
 Marilyn Cohen, Troupe 254, B. M. C. Durfee High School, Fall River, Mass.
 Billy Joe Minto, Troupe 255, Cannelton, Ind., High School.
 Robert Holloway, Loisann Erickson, Troupe 256, Twin Falls, Idaho, High School.
 Robert Paulshock, Joan T. Parente, Troupe 257, Hazleton, Penna., High School.

Weldon Gibson, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala.
 Marilyn Stokes, Ann Ellsworth, Troupe 259, Canton, New York, High School.
 Ellen Peery, Kenneth Branch, Troupe 260, Big Creek High School, War, W. Va.
 Donna Fancher, Troupe 261, Fairmont, Minn., High School.
 Ardith Spickler, Troupe 262, Walnut Ridge, Ark., High School.
 Eilert Felmming, Troupe 263, Litchfield, Minn., High School.
 Norene Phillely, Troupe 265, East Bakersfield, High School, Bakersfield, Calif.
 William Rowles, Jr. Troupe 267, Cheney, Wash., High School.
 James Miller, Troupe 269, Boonville, Ind., High School.
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 Joanne Stegnani, Troupe 301, Marked Tree, Ark., High School.
 June Wilson, Troupe 304, Prosser, Wash., High School.
 Ruth Beecher, Barbara Hatch, Troupe 305, W. Valley High School, Millwood, Wash.
 Evelynne Krenek, Troupe 309, Morton High School, Cicero, Ill.
 Sue Weaver, Carl Gennett, Troupe 310, McKinley High School, Canton, Ohio.
 Ray Mack, Joan Fife, Troupe 315, Corning, Iowa., High School.
 Herbert Stettler, Troupe 316, Williamsburg, Iowa., High School.
 Martha Metzger, Phil Perkins, Troupe 321, H. B. Plant High School, Tampa, Fla.
 Claude Carr, Jr. Troupe 322, Clayton, Mo., High School.
 Lorraine Hammer, Troupe 327, Miami, Fla., Senior High School.
 Pat Blum, Troupe 330, Watertown, S. Dak., High School.
 Rex Taylor, Troupe 331, Masontown, W. Va., High School.
 Mantie Deitiker, Troupe 335, Amarillo, Tex., Senior High School.
 Carlee Potter, Troupe 337, Superior, Nebr., High School.
 Peggy Huse, Pat Strond, Troupe 338, W. H. Adamson High School, Dallas, Tex.
 Frank Mosley, James Dickson, Troupe 336, Winslow, Arizona, High School.
 Myron Haeger, Maxine Schnitzer, Troupe 342, Dover, Ohio, High School.
 Joanne Morris, Troupe 343, Monticello, Ill., Township High School.
 Marion Birk, Troupe 348, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., High School.
 Barbara Fisher, Tom Adams, Troupe 349, Central High School, Murfreesboro, Tenn.
 Lucille Ennis, Troupe 351, Lake Park, Minn., High School.

Harold Jorgenson, Troupe 352, Robbinsdale, Minn., Jr. High School.
 Patsy Fink, Sidney Seider, Troupe 353, Abilene, Texas, High School.
 Paul Werger, Troupe 354, Greenville, Penna., High School.
 Carl Black, Troupe 355, Drew, Miss., High School.
 Catheron Dantzler, Gloria Stillions, Carl Black, Troupe 355, Drew, Miss., High School.
 Danny Norris, Troupe 357, Robinson, Ill., Township High School.
 Lee Ward, Joan Shephard, Troupe 358, Salem, Ohio, High School.
 Larry Carstensen, Troupe 359, Lyons High School, Clinton, Iowa.
 Dorothy Redmond, Robert Power, Troupe 360, Pleasantwood Mont. High School.
 Jacqueline Adams, George Humphrey, James Overby, Virginia Overold, Kenneth Pitchford, James Olsen, Troupe 362, Moorhead, Minn., High School.
 John Baryar, Josephine Weedon, Troupe 364, Jamestown, New York, High School.
 Anita Roddey, Jack Fuls, Troupe 365, Science Hill, High School, Johnson City, Tenn.
 William White, Troupe 368, Geneva, Ohio, High School.
 Eric Stokes, Troupe 376, Haddon Heights, N. J., High School.
 James Shepherd, Ruth Ann Fox, Troupe 377, Newton, Iowa, High School.
 Charles Cox, Dorothy Arnold, Troupe 378, North Side High School, Ft. Worth, Tex.
 Clarence Bolts, Troupe 379, Tonganoxie, Kansas, Rural High School.
 Robert Ward, Troupe 381, Cripple Creek, Colo., High School.
 Betty Ann Mills, Troupe 382, Jonesboro, Ark., Senior High School.
 William Welty, Troupe 384, Custer, So. Dak., High School.
 Faith Collins, Jean Bishop, Troupe 388, Oak Hill, W. Va., High School.
 Tina Eisenberg, Troupe 391, Miami Beach, Fla., Senior High School.
 Charles Stoff, Nancy McFarland, Troupe 392, Monrovia-Arcadia Duarte High School, Monrovia, Calif.
 John Wilson, Troupe 395, Moravia, Ia., High School.
 John Smith, Troupe 396, Villa Grove, Ill., High School.
 Becky Hill, Dale Humphreys, Ronald Reid, Troupe 400, McClain High School, Greenfield, Ohio.
 Bob Boatright, Troupe 401, Berea College Foundation, Berea, Ky.
 Merton Clark, Troupe 404, Kennebunk, Me., High School.
 Virginia Puich, Troupe 405, Hoover High School, San Diego, Calif.
 Francis Chapman, Troupe 406, Unicoi Co. High School, Erwin, Tenn.
 Curtis Hungerford, Troupe 407, Caldwell, Idaho, High School.
 Pat Fields, Harold Fielding, Troupe 408, Woodland, Calif., High School.
 Marilyn Kalish, Troupe 410, Heights High School, Cleveland Heights, Ohio.
 Walter Munro, Bernard Morin, Troupe 411, Northampton, Mass., High School.
 Dwight Way, Janet Wilson, Troupe 420, Frank Willis High School, Delaware, Ohio.
 Bob Flood, Troupe 425, Tucson, Ariz., Senior High School.
 Jo Ann Eblen, Troupe 427, McLeansboro, Ill., Township High School.
 Fairia Neal, Vaughn Swafford, Troupe 428, Cumberland Co. High School, Crossville, Tenn.
 Mary Waddell, Patricia Waddell, Troupe 429, St. Clairsville, Ohio, High School.
 Mary Ellen Suecker, Troupe 432, Dobyns-Bennett High School, Kingsport, Tenn.
 Mary Lou Holmes, Margaret Hoyt, Troupe 433, Eldora, Ia., Consolidated High School.
 Hazel Roeve, Troupe 434, Chowchilla, Calif., Union High School.
 Ronald Dearolf, Troupe 436, Langley High School, Pittsburgh, Penn.

Helen Farris, Troupe 438, Morrilton, Ark., High School.
 Evelyn Kleinhans, Troupe 442, Port Clinton, Ohio, High School.
 Cora Horton, Troupe 450, Barrackville, W. Va., High School.
 Arthur Brewin, Troupe 453, Lower Camden Co. Regional High School, Clementon, N. J.
 Maralyn Ballif, Billie Demos, Troupe 454, Brigham Young High School, Provo, Utah.
 Tom Ryan, Barbara St. Louis, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., Sr. High School.
 Edwin Legg, Vivien Perrine, Troupe 458, Clay, W. Va., County High School.
 Francis Czaba, Troupe 461, Parma Schaaaf High School, Parma, Ohio.
 Peter Vasilion, Troupe 462, Redondo Union High School, Redondo Beach, Calif.
 Ralph Cochran, Lillian Wollen, Troupe 463, Snohomish, Wash., High School.
 Mary Ellen Broge, Troupe 464, Freeport, Ill., High School.
 Don Sala, Troupe 465, Macomb, Ill., High School.
 Marilyn Palmer, Carol Cotterman, Troupe 467, Burnham High School, Sylvania, Ohio.
 Janet Jones, Harry Lovejoy, Barbara Kennedy, Susan Moon, Roger Tutton, Richard Bushnell, Troupe 468, Franklin High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
 Marilyn Sperline, Norma Lea Straley, Martha Thiele, Troupe 469, Wenatchee, Wash., High School.
 Pat Chenet, Sherrill Milner, Troupe 471, Lake Charles, La., High School.
 Rhea Grafton, Jolin Towns, Troupe 476, Ponce de Leon High School, Coral Gables, Fla.
 Cecil Klem, Troupe 478, Shattuck, Okla., High School.
 Gerald Connors, Troupe 479, Rayen High School, Youngstown, Ohio.
 Doris Moore, Keith Orme, Troupe 480, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Senior High School.
 Joanne Moreland, Troupe 481, Thomasville, Ga., High School.
 Bruce Peyton, Troupe 482, Logan, Ia., High School.
 John Myles, George Haskell, Troupe 487, Fayette, W. Va., High School.
 Bonnie Smebakken, Troupe 488, Hot Springs, So. Dak., High School.
 Evelynne Thibodeaux, Troupe 490, David Starr Jordan High School, Long Beach 12, Calif.
 James Weaver, Troupe 491, Fairfield, Ala., High School.
 Mary Bond, Troupe 492, Sunnyside, Wash., High School.
 Mary Bond, Troupe 492, Sunnyside, Wash., High School.
 Bud Sawyer, Troupe 494, Bay Village, Ohio, High School.
 Myran Williers, Troupe 495, Andrew Jackson High School, Miami, Fla.
 William Hull, Troupe 497, Minerva, Ohio, High School.
 Mary Louise Crecilins, Troupe 498, Lepanto, Ark., High School.
 Phyllis Mindlin, Troupe 506, Central High School, Duluth, Minn.
 Bill Stedman, Troupe 507, Ellwood City, Penna., High School.
 Alice Lind, Paul Sponheim, Troupe 508, Lincoln High School, Thief River Falls, Minn.
 Jolly Ann Horton, Troupe 510, Davenport, Iowa, Sr. High School.
 Barbara Ann Rasmussen, Troupe 512, Pocatello, Idaho, Sr. High School.
 George Hetrick, Troupe 513, Westerville, Ohio, High School.
 Pat Prewett, Shirley Field, Ulric Freeman, Troupe 517, Gunnison, Colo. County High School.
 Irene Smith, Troupe 518, Highland Park, Mich., High School.
 Margaret Hedirke, Troupe 520, William Penn Sr. High School, York, Penn.
 John F. Douglas, Joyce Bedenbaugh, Troupe 522, Columbia High School, Lake City, Fla.
 Virginia Fashbender, Troupe 523, Hastings, Minn., High School.

Drama Festivals and Contests
ALABAMA. Drama festival sponsored by the Alabama College Theatre, Montevallo, Ala. W. H. Trumbauer, director. March 11-13.

Drama Clinics
INDIANA. Drama clinic sponsored by the Department of English, Canterbury College, Danville, Ind. Dec. 4. Prof. J. C. Mickel, director.

KANSAS. Clinic sponsored by the Department of Speech, Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas. Dec. 11. Joseph A. Withey, director.

OHIO. Drama clinic sponsored by the School of Dramatic Art and Speech, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. Dec. 11. Christopher Lane, director.

OHIO. Drama clinic sponsored by the Ohio State University Theatre, Columbus, Ohio. November 13. Dr. John H. McDowell, director.

PENNSYLVANIA. Drama clinic sponsored by the Drama Department of Westminster College, New Wilmington, Pa. Nov. 6. Professor Donald L. Barbe, director.

VIRGINIA. Drama Clinic sponsored by Mary Washington College Theatre, Mary Washington College, Fredericksburg, Va. Nov. 6. J. W. Warfield, director.

Drama Conferences
DELAWARE. Ninth Delaware Dramatic conference and clinic sponsored by the University of Delaware, Dramatic Center, Dover, Dela. Nov. 6. C. R. Kase, director.

ILLINOIS. Arts conference sponsored by MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Ill., Nov. 4.

Don Soe, Troupe 525, Lincoln High School, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisc.

Mary Laurie, Troupe 528, Classical High School, Providence, R. I.

Betty Blake, Jean Pumphrey, Troupe 529, Carlisle, Ky., High School.

Richard Gordon, Betty Jo. Freeman, Gerald Morris, Lewis Wallace, Troupe 530, Hopkins, Mo., High School.

Patricia Workman, William Haskins, Troupe 531, Magnolia High School, New Martinsville, W. Va.

Florence Vidile, Virginia McMullen, Troupe 534, Mamaroneck, New York, Senior High School.

Donna Callow, Troupe 539, Warwood High School, Wheeling, W. Va.

Quilla Wheeler, Troupe 542, Kimball, W. Va., High School.

Patricia Nelson, Troupe 543, Eagle Grove, Iowa, High School.

Derek Burleson, Marilyn Dreher, Troupe 545, So. Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Wash.

William Edwards, Richard Inman, Troupe 548, Lincoln High School, Vincennes, Ind.

Betty Wood, Jim Setterberg, Troupe 551, San Diego, Calif., High School.

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Edward Hutchings, Troupe 561, Roosevelt High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

Etta Marie Wilson, Troupe 563, Zanesville, Ohio, Senior High School.

Carolyn Conley, Dillard Ledbetter, Troupe 565, Osceola High School, Kissimmee, Fla.

Martin Peterson, Troupe 566, Frankfort, Ohio, High School.

Peggy Farr, Mary Agnes Oys, Troupe 568, Academy of the Holy Angels, Minneapolis, Minn.

Dale Chamberlain, Elaine Pearce, Troupe 572, Newport, Wash., High School.

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Roger Starkey, Jackie Stahl, Troupe 583, Charles F. Brush High School, So. Euclid, Ohio.

Clifford Fisher, Troupe 585, Muscatine, Iowa, High School.

Don Patrick, Troupe 586, Dearborn, Mich., High School.

Jeanne Wright, Troupe 587, Springfield, Ohio, Sr. High School.

Carolyn Celano, Rosemary Cicco, Troupe 591, Clearview High School, Lorain, Ohio.

Jesse Jones Saffer, Troupe 594, Winchester, Ill., High School.

Larry Noling, Jewell Lain, Troupe 595, Shortridge High School, Indianapolis, Ind.

Katherine Greer, Patsy Mabree, Troupe 597, W. Helena High School, Helena, Ark.

Marshall Segale, Troupe 598, Central High School, Bridgeport, Conn.

Merle Osborn, Troupe 600, Redford Union High School, Detroit, Mich.

Philip George, Troupe 602, Knox-Center High School, Knox, Ind.

Margaret Bailer, Carleton Everett, Troupe 604, Eastchester High School, Tuckahoe, N. Y.

Dorothy Fitzgerald, Troupe 605, George Washington High School, Danville, Va.

Joan Trontell, Joseph Gentile, Troupe 606, Pueblo, Colo., Catholic High School.

Clyde Sumpler, Fred Brooks, Troupe 608, Webb City, Mo., High School.

Barbara Leahy, Troupe 609, Bedford, Ind., High School.

Betty Snodgrass, Troupe 610, Spring City, Tenn., High School.

Marilyn Tate, Troupe 613, Normal, Ill., Community High School.

Mary Picarallo, Rocco Diotalvi, Troupe 617, Bridgeport, Penna., High School.

Eleanor Lockridge, Robert Lister, Troupe 619, Chariton, Iowa, High School.

Coleen Campbell, Joan Caldwell, Beverly Fisher, Troupe 621, Uintah High School, Vernal, Utah.

Joe Epperson, Troupe 624, New Albany, Ind., Senior High School.

Barbara May, Phyllis Graham, Troupe 628, Spokane, Wash., North Central High School.

Elizabeth Clark, Troupe 629, Memorial High School, St. Marys, Ohio.

George Deligianis, Troupe 630, Hudson, New York, High School.

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- Dan Giovannini, Troupe 636, Manistique, Mich., High School.
- Lorna Erickson, R. J. Pederson, Troupe 640, Columbia High School, Richland, Wash.
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- Nancy Slee, Robert Swan, Troupe 664, Harvey High School, Painesville, Ohio.
- Eugene Fahnert, Olga Schenck, Troupe 666, McKinley High School, Sebring, Ohio.
- Mae Randolph, Troupe 667, Bristol, W. Va., High School.
- Jane Moriarity, Troupe 668, School of the Brown County Ursulines, St. Martin, Ohio.
- Robert Miller, Troupe 670, Wayne, Mich., High School.
- Barbara Niven, Robert Firby, Troupe 672, Nelson Aldrich High School, Lakewood, R. I.
- Donna Maginn, Troupe 673, Mt. Morris, Mich., High School.
- Claire Ann Terhoar, Troupe 674, St. Boniface High School, Cold Spring, Minn.
- David Aldrich, Troupe 676, Norwich, New York, High School.
- David Follette, Troupe 679, Platt R. Spencer High School, Geneva, Ohio.
- Henry Giles, Gloria Fitzwater, Troupe 680, South High School, Omaha, Nebr.
- Wilda Hayes, Troupe 682, Fairmount, Ind., High School.
- Bill Powell, Helen Baker, Troupe 684, McKinley High School, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.
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- Donald Myrold, Catherine Erickson, Troupe 706, Crookston, Minn., Central High School.
- Helen Mae Kenzie, Richard Chalmers, Troupe 707, Hilo, Hawaii, High School.
- Marcia Mary Healy, Troupe 708, Stanbrook Hall, Duluth, Minn.
- Jo Curran, Troupe 710, Cathedral High School, Trenton, New Jersey.
- Jackie Waite, Jack Wright, Troupe 711, Murphy High School, Mobile, Ala.
- Fred Tanselle, Troupe 714, Lebanon, Ind., Junior-Senior High School.
- Ina Mae Kupker, Jean Ferguson, Troupe 715, Charles City, Iowa, High School.
- Bobby Earl Stewart, Troupe 717, Fayetteville, Ark., High School.
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- Mary Lou Borowicz, Troupe 730, Amherst, Ohio, High School.
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- Jack Brummer, Troupe 733, East Alton High School, Wood River, Ill.
- Peggy Campbell, Troupe 734, Little Flower High School, Royal Oak, Mich.
- Lottie Lou Mulligan, Troupe 737, St. Mary's Academy, Xavier, Kans.
- Richard Finch, Roger Keel, Troupe 740, Howe Military School, Howe, Ind.
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- Courtenay Ernst, Troupe 742, New City High School, New City, Kans.
- John Myles Thomas, Jr., Cleona Smith, Troupe 745, Helena, Mont. High School.
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- Marilyn Wall, Troupe 807, Benjamin Bosse High School, Evansville, Ind.
- Elmer Crouch, Troupe 808, Augusta Tilghman High School, Paducah, Ky.
- James McNitt, Delores Theil, Troupe 810, Dundee, Ia., Consolidated High School.
- Joy Mustizer, Troupe 812, Glendale, Calif., High School.
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- Wanda Ratts, Troupe 818, Martinsville, Ind., High School.
- Stanley Reuter, Troupe 819, Scottsbluff, Nebr., High School.
- Arden King, Troupe 820, Triadelphia High School, Wheeling, W. Va.
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- Donald Rehberg, Troupe 838, West Allis, Wisc., High School.
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TWO BRAND NEW PLAYS . . . by ANNE COUTER MARTENS

SUSIE, THE SIREN

3 Act Comedy, 7 m., 9 w., 1 Set

Story Susie has decided to be a siren and Jim is to be her victim. Jim doesn't realize what's up until Susie tells him to prove his love for her by (1) bringing a flower from the Oakley garden and (2) painting "Beat Harristown" in red letters on the rival team's school door. Jim says no. He's promised Susie's dad (the principal) that there'll be no vandalism. But Susie insists and Jim weakens. To save Jim, the kids take over. Susie's brother does the paint job and his girl-friend, Gussie, gets the flower. When Jim comes back to tell Susie he means to stand by his promise, the flower is there at his feet and Susie comes rushing in to praise him as her hero for painting the door. And then the fireworks begin! Miss Oakley comes raving in about her flower she meant to enter in the Garden Show. She calls the police and it's only a quick tackle on Jim's part that brings Susie down behind a chair before Miss Oakley sees the flower in her hair! The rival principal storms in blazing mad: The culprit must be found and expelled from the team. Events catch up with Jim and he is expelled from the team in spite of his protests. Susie is appaled at the mischief her ideas have caused, and repents as Gussie



Blimp: I think she went that way.

comes to the rescue in a scene that plays for steady laughter. Miss Oakley gets her flower back in time to enter it. Jim is vindicated and all ends in a scramble of fun and excitement.

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THE PROFESSOR GOES WILD

3 Act Farce-Comedy, 7 m., 8 w., 1 Set

Story Prof. Scott practically had to beat off the girls with a baseball bat. To add to his problems Mrs. O'Brien is coming to pass on his qualifications. If she approves, she will donate a new Science Building for Scott to head. All this right in the midst of Haywire Week, the time when the Seniors take over. This year the stunt is to get childhood pictures of the faculty and then to photograph them wearing similar costumes today. The irate Taffy has located a baby shot of him in bib and diapers and Taffy publicly taunts him with being a milksop. Scott's friend announces that Scott is an ex-Golden Gloves champ. This is news to Scott. Before he can do anything about it, Socko, a professional boxer arrives, and the group quickly arranges a match between the eager Socko and the reluctant professor. Right then the photographers arrive to take the Hay-

wire picture. Scott is blindfolded and the girls, led by the impish Taffy, promptly deck him in oversize bib and nightgown! Just as this happens, Dean Farrel appears with Mrs. O'Brien! That does for the Science Building! But Mrs. O'Brien thinks more favorably of him when she hears of the boxing match. With true Irish pep she likes a fight, and she announces that if Scott wins she'll give the building after all. Scott now has a double incentive, for he has discovered that he loves the irrepressible Taffy and it is more important to win her approval than to get the Science Building. The results of the fight bring down the house. Here's a comedy that's a knockout from start to finish.

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THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING CO.

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Chicago 16, Ill.

On The High School Stage

News items published in this department are contributed by schools affiliated with

The National Thespian Society

Waukegan, Ill.

WITH Marjorie L. Johnson as director, dramatics students enjoyed an exceptionally fine season during 1947-48 at the Waukegan Township High School (Thespian Troupe 857). The season began with the Dramatics Department production of *Seven Keys to Baldpate* late in October. The Senior class production of *The Imaginary Invalid* followed on December 6, 7. In March the Dramatics Department followed with two well received performances of *Angel Street*. The Senior dramatics class offered *The Royal Family* as the fourth major theatre attraction of the season. Miss Johnson established Troupe 857 of this school with nineteen students forming the charter roll.—Donna Pettit-clair, Secretary

Winter Park, Fla.

TWO full-length plays were staged this past year at the Winter Park High School (Thespian Troupe 850) with Mrs. Olive J. Park as director and Thespian sponsor. *The Big Blow Up* was offered by the Junior class early in November, while the Senior class staged the comedy, *Professor, How Could You?* in April. Both plays attracted large audiences. The season also saw the production of a bill of three one-act plays advertised for "Thespian Night". Mrs. Park established Thespian Troupe 850 at this school with membership in the Society being awarded to twenty-three students during the season.—Evelyn Schrader, Secretary

Grant, Nebr.

A large audience witnessed the Senior class production of *Blithe Spirit* on April 30 at the Perkins County High School, with Mrs. J. H. Wampole as director. The other three act play of the season, *Tish*, was given by the Junior class on December 6. A major Thespian contribution of the year was the playbill of three one-acts given on February 10, with the program consisting of *I Shall be Waiting*, *There Shall Be Light*, and *His First Girl*. Two other playbills of one-acts were also given during the year. *Riders to the Sea* was given superior rating in a drama clinic. Perhaps the highlight of the season was the formal installation of Thespian Troupe 844 with Mrs. Wampole as director.—Wayne Holoway, Secretary

Grand Junction, Colo.

MAKE-UP, interpretive reading, and choric work were among the subjects studied this past season by dramatics students of the Grand Junction High School (Troupe 841) with Irene Gray as director. By way of major dramatic productions the Junior class staged two performances of *Seven Keys To Baldpate* late in November, while the Drama group offered two performances of *The Little Minister* in February. The third three-act play, *Double Door*, was given by the Senior class on April 1, 2. The season also included the production of several one-act plays including *Finders Keepers* which was given Superior rating in the play festival held on April 27.

Twenty-five students received the Thespian pledge.—Lillian Arceri, Secretary

Mt. Vernon, Ill.

THE operetta, *Chimes of Normandy*, opened the 1947-48 season of dramatic productions at the Mt. Vernon Township High School (Troupe 804), with Leila E. Mudge as director and Thespian sponsor. This success was followed by a performance of the all-school play, *Ever Since Eve* on November 28. In February the dramatics club made many friends with a public program of one-acts consisting of *Will o' the Wisp*, *How to Propose*, *Murder at Mrs. Loring's*, scene from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Bread*. Fourteen students were given membership in the Troupe.

Ardmore, Pa.

ANITA M. TAYLOR'S program in dramatics at the Lower Merion Senior High School (Troupe 801) this past season resulted in a wide range of dramatic experience for many students. Two major plays, *Our Town* and *My Sister Eileen*, were presented with large audiences present for both performances. The Showpeople club offered two one-acts for assembly on March 4, 5. The Latin American Club and Showpeople were joint sponsors of the production of *Tooth or Shave* late in May. Another worth while project of the season was the broadcast over Station WIBG in Philadelphia on January 30. A number of Showpeople members attended a matinee performance of *The Glass Menagerie* on April 1.—Susan Parran, Secretary

Tempe, Ariz.

THE 1947-48 dramatics season at the Tempe Union High School (Troupe 800) was highlighted by performances of *Our Town* (December 3) and *We Shook the Family Tree* (April 12), with Harry Copping, directing.—Jackie Sheely, Secretary

Ysleta, Texas

DRAMATICS students of the Ysleta High School (Troupe 799) found much to please them this past season in the dramatics program offered by sponsor Roy C. Chambliss. The year saw the production of two full-length plays, *Smilin' Through* and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and an evening of one-acts consisting of *The Valiant*, *When the Whirlwind Blows* and *Antic Spring*, with the latter being sponsored by the Sock and Buskin Club. *Antic Spring*, was given eight performances in the school and community, winning a rating of first place in the district play contest. The dramatics class staged three one-acts for assembly programs during the fall term.—Billy Gilbert, Secretary

Xavier, Kansas

SEVEN one-act plays were given during the spring term by various dramatics groups of the Saint Mary's Academy (Thespian Troupe 737) with Sister Elizabeth Ann as director of dramatics. The spring term also included a music festival, and music and drama program, and a trip by a number of students to the Catholic Theater Drama Festival held in St. Louis on March 5, 6. While in St. Louis these students saw a professional performance of *I Remember Mama* with Charlotte Greenwood. Major plays of the season were *Jessica's Journey*, staged by the Senior class on November 16, and *First Dance*, presented by the Dramatics Department on February 15.—Jean Weishaar, Secretary

Wilder, Idaho

THREE major dramatics events highlighted the spring term program at the Wilder, Idaho High School (Troupe 709) with Cornelia Holmes as dramatics director. On March 5 Thespians gave a performance of *The Little Minister*. On March 29 came an evening of three-act plays, *Pink and Patches*, *Red Carnations*, and *Antic Spring*, staged by three

LADIES' LOUNGE

A Comedy for the Ladies in Three Acts

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Smart lines with a tinge of sophistication mark this play as above the average for an all-woman cast

Twenty women — Five parts may be omitted if desired.

Here's a three-act comedy for the ladies with gowns and feminine finery playing an important part. The play takes place in the Ladies' Lounge of the swanky Bellevue Manor Hotel on Cape Cod. Helen Johnson accepts the position as matron of the Ladies' Lounge with the understanding that her sister, Shirley, recovering from a long illness, will share her room for the summer. The guests take to Helen and welcome Shirley's arrival. Roger Hutton, nephew of Cyril Hutton, a millionaire who is staying at the hotel, arrives at the same time. Lola Williams, the typical Little Theatre woman, Ada Cantwell, a frustrated would-be coloratura and Vera Monroe, a self-styled poet, are doting mothers who learn that Roger is to come of age and inherit a sizable fortune, and they try to promote a romance between their teen age daughters, Faye, Judy and Jill with the heir apparent. Linda Carson and Mona Otis, two women angling to marry into money, have staked a claim to Cyril Hutton and the comedy team in their mercenary pursuit creates a lot of laughs but loses out to the quiet, dignified Mrs. Anderson who finally gets him. The colorful Deeka Schiller, a Viennese Chocolatee, loathes America but loves the U. S. dollar. She belittles the guests in her high-handed Continental manner and tangles with Mitzi, the cigarette vendor, a wise-cracking America-for-Americans girl who delights in telling her off in good old U. S. style. Deeka becomes involved with Count El Greco who turns out to be an F. B. I. agent seeking evidence against her for income tax evasion. The highlight of the summer is the Youth Dance given for the young guests of the hotel. Lola and Ada are in hopes that Faye and Judy will receive Roger's bid to be his partner but when Shirley is the recipient, Faye and Judy incite their mothers to complain to the management inasmuch as Shirley is not a guest — but charity. They gain their point and Shirley is told she cannot attend. Roger learns of the intrigue and springs a delightful surprise. Throughout the play, little Jenny Baskerville, the precocious ten-year-old mischief-maker, keeps things at a humorous pace and does her good deed for the summer by giving Judy and Faye a timely case of poison ivy that keeps them from attending the Youth Dance.

BAKER'S PLAYS — 178 Tremont Street, Boston 11, Massachusetts and Denver 2, Colorado

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different school groups. The year closed with the Senior class staging *The Fighting Littles* on May 19. The play, *Red Carnations*, was also entered in the district drama festival.—*Patsy Thomas, Secretary*

Geneva, Ohio

TWO popular performances of the comedy, *The More the Merrier*, were presented on November 20, 21 by the Senior class of the Platt R. Spencer High School (Troupe 879) as the first major dramatic event of the past season. Equally successfully were the two performances of *Suspense* staged by the Junior class on May 6, 7. The one-act, *The Valiant*, was given several times during the spring, finally reaching the State Drama Festival held in Columbus on April 16. Clyde A. Ingham served as dramatics director and troupe sponsor during the season.—*Marianne Harvey, Secretary*

Berea, Ohio

LOVE Rides the Rails and *Dear Ruth*, and an evening of one-act plays staged by the Masquers Club, were the three major dramatics events of the 1947-48 season at the

Berea High School (Thespian Troupe 612), with E. J. Keeney as sponsor. The playbill of one-acts consisted of *Moon-up*, *The Devil and Miss Appleby*, and *In the Sock*. An unusual event of the season was the demonstration on make-up by a representative of the Cleveland Playhouse.—*Janet Whims, Secretary*

Lima, Ohio

FIVE major plays were given this past season at the Central High School (Troupe 553) with A. Ruth Moore as director of dramatics. *Nothing But the Truth* was given on December 12 under the sponsorship of the Junior class. Thespians and the Junior-Senior dramatics club were joint sponsors of the production of *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *Nine Girls* on January 30 and February 27 respectively. *After all, It's Spring* was given by the Freshman-Sophomore dramatics club on March 12. The Senior class production of *I Remember Mama* closed the season on May 7. The year also saw the presentation of several one-act plays and the operetta, *New Moon*, staged on April 9, 10.—*LaVonne Fomkinson, Secretary*

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High Bridge, N.J.

MEMBERS of the newly-formed Thespian Troupe 642 of the High Bridge High School lost no time in getting their program under way as soon as they became established as a Troupe. On May 13, 14 they offered a program of three one-act plays, *One of Us*, *Winter Sunset*, and *One Mad Night*, with the three performances being extremely well received. The most popular were the two

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performances of *One Mad Night* staged by the Junior class on April 8, 9, and the performance of *High Pressure Homer* staged by the Senior class on November 20, 21. In many ways, the highlight of the year was the formal installation of Troupe 642 on May 28. Another interesting event of the season was the trip to Lafayette College at Easton, Pa., for a performance of *Sound of Hunting*. Gladys D. Daugherty had charge of the dramatics program.—Eleanor Hogmark, Secretary

St. Marys, Ohio

THREE full-length plays were given this past season at the Memorial High School, with Lillian Codington as dramatics director and sponsor for Thespian Troupe 629. The first three-act play of the season, *Seventeen Is Terrific*, was staged by the Junior class on November 15. On March 13 Thespians gave *Don't Keep Him Waiting*. The third production of the season, *The Charm School*, came on April 30 under the sponsorship of the Senior class. The one-act play, *Who Gets the Car Tonight*, was given as part of the program for a Thespian initiation ceremony held in January.—Ronald Cook, Secretary

Lorain, Ohio

HOW to develop a better yearly program in dramatics activities was among the projects studied this past season at the Clear-

view High School (Troupe 591) with E. Valerie Jenkins as director. The season saw the performance of two major plays, *Papa Is All*, and *Tom and Huck*, with both plays sponsored by Thespians. Thespians were also responsible for the presentation of several one-act plays for demonstration purposes including *Exchange*, *Overtones*, and *Riders to the Sea*. A number of students participated in district and state speech contests.

Cheney, Wash.

TWO performances of *What A Life* on January 22, 23, were offered by Thespians of Troupe No. 267 of the Cheney High School, with Leone Webber as director. This success was followed with two performances of *A Murder Has Been Arranged* on April 1, 2, also directed by Miss Webber. A radio version of *Sixteen* presented before the student body on March 17 and Thespian attendance at a performance of *Ten Little Indians* given by the local Civic Theatre gave additional interest to the spring program in dramatics. The season also saw the performance of the one-acts, *A Note to Myself* and *Goodbye to the Lazy K*.—Georgiana Wallace, Secretary

Cameron, W. Va.

THE one major production of the 1947-48 season at the Cameron High School (Troupe 43) was given in March under the sponsorship of the Dramatics Club, with Vera McCormick as director. The Dramatics Club also staged two one-act plays—*Rose of Ann Rutledge* and *Guess Again Ghost*—on February 10. Senior Thespians staged a class night minstrel on May 18. Play productions and reviews of current plays were among the subjects considered at the dramatics club meetings sponsored during the season.—Fern Iseninger, Secretary

Statement of the ownership, management, circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946.

Of Dramatics magazine, published monthly (8 times) at Cincinnati, Ohio, for October, 1948, State of Ohio, County of Hamilton.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Ernest Bavely, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of Dramatics, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations).

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Ernest Bavely, Editor
Sworn to and subscribed before me this 3rd day of September, 1948. (Seal) Geo. Schraffenberger,
(My commission expires July 25, 1949).



Scene from the production of *The Late Christopher Bean* given as the senior class play at the Findlay, Ohio, Senior High School (Thespian Troupe 451). Directed by Wilbur Hall.

What's New Among Books and Plays

The purpose of this department is to keep our readers posted on the latest theatre and drama publications available from publishers. Mention or review of a book or play in this department does not constitute an endorsement by Dramatics. Opinions expressed are those of the reviewer only.

Banner Play Bureau, Inc.
San Francisco 2, California

Once to Every Boy, a play in one act, by Stanley Richards. 7 m., 4 w. Royalty, \$5.00. Young Clop returns to his parents after having run away with a circus, prepared for the punishment he expects to receive from his father. Instead, his father relates to him, in true understanding of the problems involved, how in his own youth he too had become infatuated with trapeze artist. This play has good theatre possibilities. Recommended for drama festivals and contests.

She Must Wear Green, a comedy in one act, by Paul S. McCoy. 1 m., 2 w. Ann Hathaway objects to her mother buying her a green dress, but she loses no time in changing her mind when she learns that her boy friend, Michael O'Connor, likes green especially when it is worn on St. Patrick's Day. Non-royalty.

Three Isn't A Crowd, a comedy in one act, by Paul S. McCoy. 2 m., 2 w. Mary Lane is ready to forget Bill Taylor for the rich Sylvester Hallcott, but she realizes the error of her thinking when she finds out Sylvester's flowers were sent to her by mistake. Good for club and classroom use.—*Elmer Strong*

Crown Publishers

419 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

The Theatre Handbook and Digest of Plays, edited by Bernard Sobel. 890 pages. 1948. Price, \$4.00. Of the theatre handbooks and guides which have appeared in recent years this one by Mr. Sobel is easily the best in several ways. Here one finds information on every aspect of theatre drama including articles on acting, community theatre movement, dance, motion picture, propaganda in the play, theatre of various countries, and theories of the drama. Especially helpful to theatre workers is the information on various theatrical organizations such as the American Academy of Arts and Letters. Also extremely valuable to teachers and students are the biographical sketches of many playwrights, past and present, and the synopses of many of the world's best known plays. Certain well known theatre personalities are missing from the list which Mr. Sobel presents, but this is a minor fault which can be easily corrected in a revised edition. We recommend this book to all who wish to be well informed on the theatre.—*Ernest Bavely*

The Northwestern Press
Minneapolis, Minn.

Let's Broadcast, a textbook for secondary schools on the use of radio broadcasting, by Everett C. Braun and Frederick Jackson Stanley. 250 pages. 1948. Price \$2.50. The preparation of material for radio broadcasting is, admittedly, a problem with many high school teachers and groups called upon to present radio programs. The authors of *Let's Broadcast* have gone a long way towards the solution of this problem by offering teachers and students invaluable information on how to put on actual radio broadcasts. Especially helpful are the chapters given to a description of the various types of radio programs which a school can present. Equally helpful are the chapters on the preparation of the script, timing of the program, and microphone technique. The book closes with a section entitled "Getting More Out of Broadcasting" which includes a statement on how to prepare an audience reaction sheet. *Let's Broadcast*

comes as a welcomed addition to the limited information now available on broadcasting by secondary schools. It is certainly a book that every high school should have in its library.—*Ernest Bavely*

Walter H. Baker Company
178 Tremont Street, Boston, Mass.

Sandals and Golden Heels, a fantasy in one act, by Maxine Finsterwald. 1 w., 1 boy, 1 girl. A delightful bit of whimsy about a little prince who finds it difficult to put away childhood ways to assume the burdens of a queen. Highly recommended for grade and junior high schools.

This Changing World and The Story of Our Flag, two plays for children, by Lucille Sylvester. Price, 40 cents. Grade school children will find both of these two playlets worth while as dramatics productions. Parts for many students are provided.

High Adventure, a morality play for Youth, by Ruth C. Rocher. Price 50 cents. While this playlet is designed mainly for church use, it can be given by upper grade and junior high school student. Costume making will provide excellent opportunities for creative work as part of the presentation of this play.

Goodbye Miss Lizzie Borden, a sinister play in one-act, by Lillian De La Torre. 3 women. Royalty, \$5.00. The action of this rather morbid drama takes place at the scene of brutal murder of two people on the first

anniversary of the gruesome affair. The leading roles are two sisters who committed the crime but who managed to be acquitted.

Ivan Bloom Hardin Co.,
3806 Cottage Grove Ave., Des Moines, Iowa

Wuthering Heights proves to be a strong dramatic cutting of scenes from the novel by Emily Bronte. The characters, 2 m., 3 w., retain the flavor of the novel in their conversation. This fine selection offers opportunity for character portrayal and restraint, worthy of contest use.

The Boor, a farcial selection from the play of that name by Anton Tchekoff, reveals the quarrel of the Widow Popov with Lt. Smirnov, who comes to collect a bill, but who finally wins her consent to marry him. If a student understands the Russian characters with their many contradictions, this should afford him contest material.

What Men Live By is a cutting of the drama by Leo Tolstoi. A Russian cobbler and his wife care for a young man who turns out to be an angel, Michael, and who teaches them that "love is what men live by". A powerful reading for contest and church use. it is best suited to a boy's use.

The Soul of Ann Rutledge, by Bernie Babcock, a dramatic reading of the love of Ann Rutledge and Abe Lincoln, is almost poetic in its word choice and prose rhythm. Sensing her death, Ann tells Abe that her soul will be with him when he feels a glad joy in his heart and a strong inner power different from all men.—*June Lingo*

The Play Club, Inc.
551 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

The Underground River, a war drama in three acts, by May Sarton. 10 m., 3 w. Royalty, \$25.00 to non-members of the Play Club. (Royalty-free to Club members as long as

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A vibrant dramatization of the message "If ye break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Field." The barn is the hideaway for the spirit soldiers of World War I and for escaping allied air men of World War II. Two soldiers meet, one of earlier Flanders Field, the other a wounded aviator. As they converse we gain a clearer insight into the meaning of the immortal lines of "In Flanders Field." The characters are a French peasant farmer, his two daughters, a German officer, an aviator and a soldier.

THE ETERNAL BRIDE

By Thomas Seller. 4m., 2w., Int. 30 min.

Two vacationing mountain climbers are mystified by an old man who sits in the lobby of the inn where they are staying and watches ceaselessly out of the window as if he were waiting for some one. When he tells them that he's waiting for his bride, that this is his honeymoon, that he's been married for fifty years, and that his bride is twenty, they're sure he must be crazy. When, however, as a result of a terrific avalanche, some old ice crevasses are opened and a beautiful young girl is rescued from one of them in an apparently death-like frozen state and is revived to life it seems the old man's faith has transcended all the laws of nature. But the old man has failed to reckon that while his bride has remained as young and beautiful as the day he married her, he has grown old and wrinkled. And so, without telling her who he is, he extracts a promise from her that she will remain true to her husband always and wait for him wherever she may be. Then he goes off into the night.

their membership is in force at the time of the performance.) The play centers around the poet and teacher Madeleine Closset and her work in the French Marquis during World War II. The average high school group would find this play difficult to cast and stage, for it requires mature characters and two stage sets. For the advanced groups and Little Theatres that are looking for something different, this is a well written play that offers excellent character studies.

Hollywood Here I Come! a farce in three acts, by Conrad Seiler. 4m., 5w. Royalty, \$25.00 to non-members of the Play Club. (Royalty-free to Club members as long as their membership is in force at the time of the performance.) There is one easy stage set and the characters in this enjoyable comedy are easy to cast. Cornelia Burke, who works in the Fan-Mail department, has her hands full when she undertakes to cushion the entrance of her school chum from Iowa into the movies. Jane Mayberry really has a time breaking into the movies. Mrs. Tweedie, the movies-struck, landlady adds to Cornelia's worries. Every one will enjoy the evening with this good clean fun—Jean E. Donahey

Samuel French,

25 W. 45 Street, New York City

Mrs. January and Mr. Ex, a comedy, by Zoe Akins. 9m., 6w. Royalty, \$25.00. A flutter-brained millionaire with communist leanings rents a \$40 a month cottage to prepare for the Revolution. Here she meets and marries an ex-President. The incidents are pure nonsense; the paradox, appealing. So much depends on the two leads that it would be a risk choice for high schools. Community theatres might have the right people.

Madam Ada, a three act play, by Aurand Harris. 3m., 5w. Royalty, \$25.00. This was the winning play of the Midwestern Writers' Conference in 1947. Into the peaceful home

of Essie and her niece comes the older sister, Ada. Years ago she had run away with a carnival and became a crystal reader. Ada begins to use her wisdom to help the niece marry the right suitor and to hasten Essie's long drawn-out romance with the church organist. There is a bit of her past too that adds a touch of scandal to the scene. The play is like many village plays—not much punch.—Roberta D. Sheets

I Wouldn't Know, a farce in three acts, by Hazel Peavey. 3m., 7w. Non-royalty. In a "Rest Cure Home" anything can happen and in Miss Payne's home, it does. Psychopathic cases, a runaway bride-to-be, a scientist, a reporter, the nurse (who is not a nurse) and the doctor, (who is not a doctor) all become involved in a series of entanglements. It is amazing how quickly the author untangles all the characters from their plights.—Roberta Dinwiddie Sheets

Ten Little Indians, a mystery in three acts, by Agatha Christie. 8m., 3w. Royalty quoted upon application. Eight guests who have never met before are invited by a mysterious host to spend a week-end on Indian Island, off the coast of Devon. In the dismal house on this out-of-the-way island are a housekeeper and a butler who have never met their employer. These ten persons find themselves accused, by a voice that seems to come out of no-where, of being murderers, and they are compelled by the storm to remain in the house. In the livingroom is a statuette clustered mantle with a nursery rhyme scroll above, telling how each little Indian met his death until there was none. As the guests check on each other's stories, the statuettes begin to disappear and are found broken; so one after another of the group are found murdered, each in accordance with the fate predicted by the nursery rhyme scroll. There is excitement, suspicion, terror, enough to last until the final curtain. There is a single setting, with the

action of the five scenes covering a time of three days, making costume changes necessary. The characters are well within the range of advanced high school groups.—Jean E. Donahey

Dramatists Play Service,

6 E. 39 Street, New York 16, N. Y.

Having a Wonderful Time, a comedy, by Arthur Kober. 17m., 14w. Royalty, \$25.00. In a camp, various city folks seek relaxation, entertainment and romance. The variety in the quests and in camp employees make the humor. The romance falls upon a working girl taking a vacation. The satirical scenes camp patrons would appreciate. There are three acts with eight scenes. Although the author has somewhat simplified the setting, directors would find it a real problem in staging.

Power Without Glory, a murder melo-drama by Michael Clayton Hutton. 3m., 4w. Royalty, \$35.00 - \$25.00. The scene is the living room behind a London Food Shop. The characters are the family. The older son, spoiled and indulged by his mother, has managed to win the love of his brother's fiancée while the brother is in the service. He is also involved with another young woman who is found beaten to death. Divided between a desire to protect and a basic honesty, the mother finally leads her son to the police. The play moves swiftly toward the climax, the characters are well drawn, the suspense sustained. It would be difficult for secondary schools and the theme makes it undesirable.—Roberta D. Sheets

Greenberg: Publisher

201 East 57th Street, New York 2, N. Y.

How to Write a Play, by Robert Finch. 1948. Price, \$2.50. The author approaches this discussion from the point of view of writing the one-act play. In doing this, he urges the beginner to use the classical idea of one locale. He adds that the one-act set makes the play more practical for staging. He urges for action, rather than exposition as being more interesting. He pleads for naturalness in characterization, setting, and dialogue. This book is very practical. The author makes a convincing plea for economy in technical stage directions that can be readily followed, in every way. He demonstrates in considerable detail in order to help the beginner to achieve simplicity. To make this manual still more practical the author goes into fine detail in demonstrating the actual working out of a plot. He literally writes a play before the reader's eyes which is printed in full later in the book. The added help of telling how to market a manuscript and the listing of Broadway producers, managers and play agents brings this compact, simply, clearly and interestingly written book to a close.—Earl W. Blank

Pan American Union, Washington, D. C.

Blue Blood, a comedy in three acts, by D. Aguilera, Malta and Willis Knapp Jones. 3m., 5w., extras (musicians). Royalty, quoted upon application to W. K. Jones, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio. This is a play of an international romance and its difficulties due to the differences in the Latin and North American customs and viewpoints. Although there are three stage sets required, they are fairly easy to do. One of the characters must be done by a pantomime expert to portray the deaf-mute servant. All the other parts will be easy to cast. Jim Adams and his sister Ruth finally solve the problems involved in their choice of mates from South America. Mother Adams and Aunt Victoria De La Vega do their best to keep the young folks apart, but learn that love conquers in the end. A fine project for the Spanish clubs to present their work for Pan-American Union Celebration.—Jean E. Donahey

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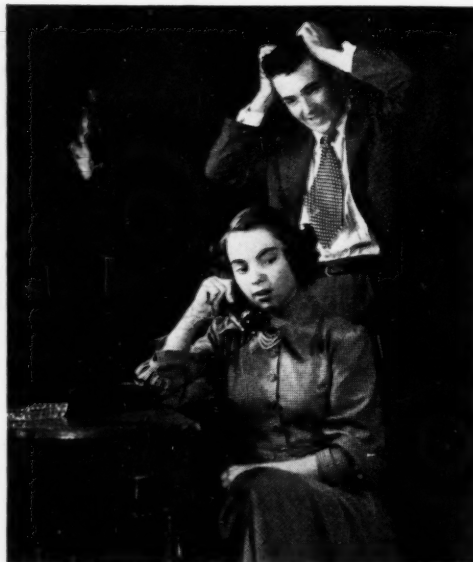
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gets ribbed all over town for that one and gossipy neighbors call to commiserate her mother! In the meantime Biff has problems of his own. He is secretly engaged and his girl resents the way Lois keeps throwing herself at Biff's head. They have a quarrel and Lois and Lee are also at outs. Pigeon's dad comes storming in, for Pigeon has even phoned the bank president about the tea shoppe! Pigeon is aghast at the harm she has done. In a wonderfully pleasing finale she stops "imagining" and takes firm hold of the havoc she has wrought. Now she copes realistically with the problems of her family and solves them happily in a delightful finale.

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